

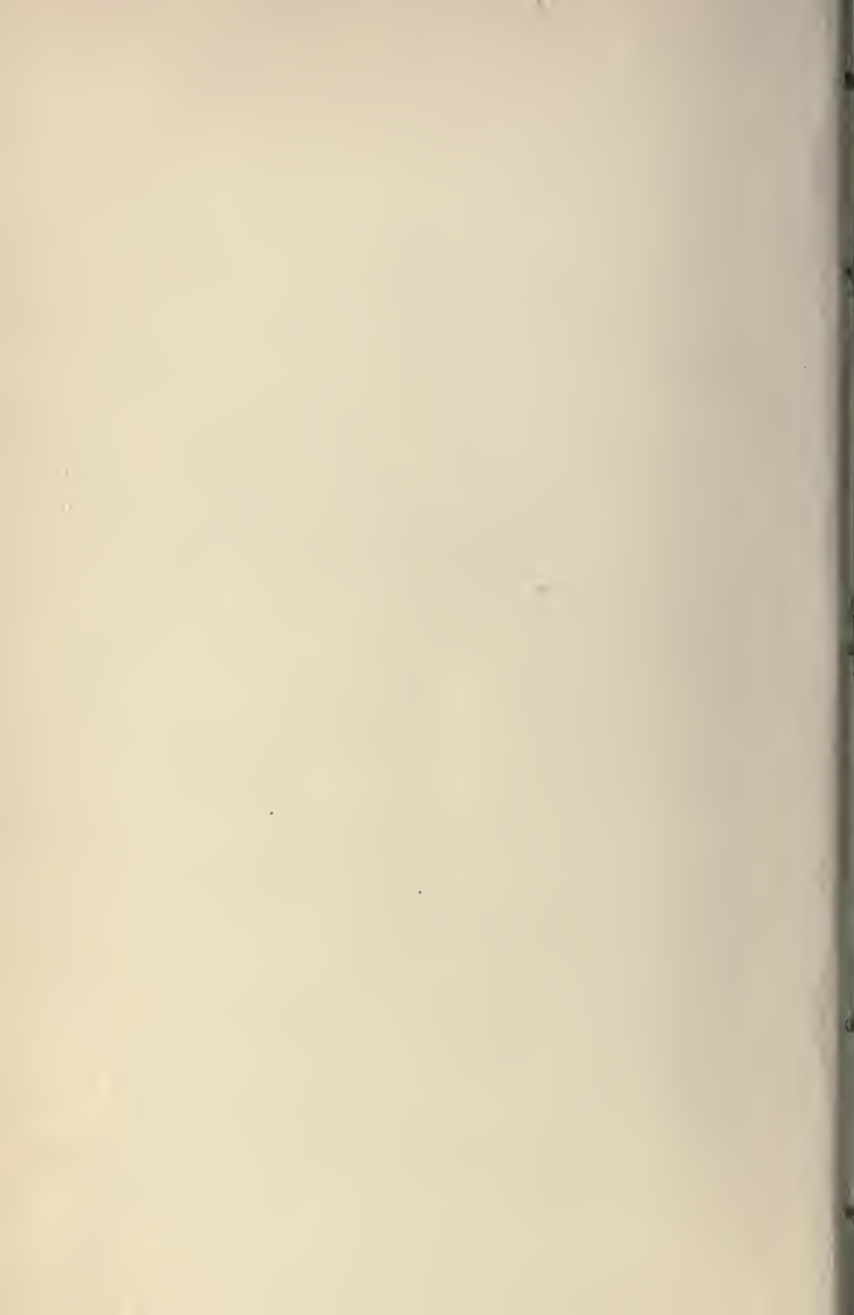


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*Portraits
of Literary Women*

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PEN-PORTRAITS OF

LITERARY WOMEN

BY THEMSELVES AND OTHERS

EDITED BY
HELEN GRAY CONE
AND
JEANNETTE L. GILDER

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES BY THE FORMER.

VOL. I.

CASSELL & COMPANY, LIMITED,
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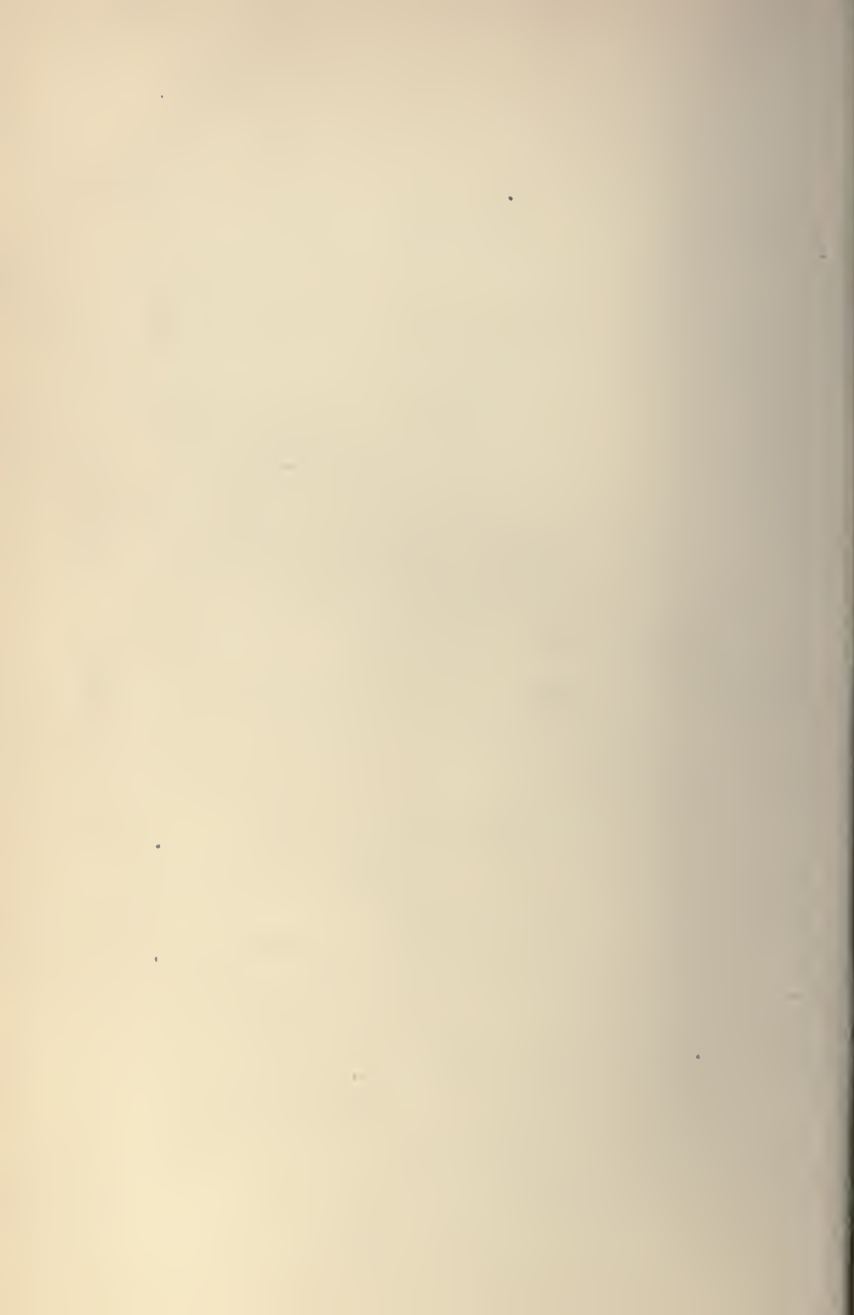
1887,

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
HANNAH MORE, ...	9
FRANCES BURNEY (MME. D'ARBLAY), ...	45
MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (GODWIN), ...	81
MARY W. GODWIN (SHELLEY), ...	109
MARY LAMB, ...	131
MARIA EDGEWORTH, ...	161
JANE AUSTEN, ...	195
JOANNA BAILLIE, ...	223
LADY BLESSINGTON, ...	245
MARY RUSSELL MITFORD, ...	269



PREFATORY NOTE.

THIS book was suggested by Mr. Mason's "Personal Traits of British Authors," published by Charles Scribner's Sons. With a single exception—Charlotte Brontë—the editor of that excellent work excluded from his pages the literary women of England. The belief that the public would find interest in a presentation of the characteristics and surroundings of many of these women, has induced us to supplement Mr. Mason's volumes with the present series of "Pen Portraits."

The distinction in title implies a slight change of plan. We have not confined ourselves to the depicting of personal traits, but have admitted a descriptive background; beyond the figures of Charlotte and Emily Brontë, a glimpse is caught of the wild moors, purple with heather; and the Mediterra-

nean, dark with storm, appears behind the graceful head of Mary Shelly. When a critical remark of some fellow-worker seemed to have point, we have included it; such passages may be regarded as pencillings, in various hands, on the margin of the catalogue of our gallery.

The plan of this work originally included English writers only. In the course of its preparation, however, a certain amount of material relative to two others (to the greatest of Frenchwomen and to that American woman of letters who most notably represents an interesting past phase of national growth), has presented itself and has not been rejected.

For the extracts used in these two volumes we give full credit, both at the foot of the quotations and in an alphabetically arranged list at the end of each volume. To these authors and to their publishers we acknowledge our deep obligation, for, without the material they have furnished, these "Pen Portraits" could never have been drawn.

THE EDITORS.

HANNAH MORE.

1745—1833.

HANNAH MORE.

Hannah More was born on the 2nd of February, 1745, in the hamlet of Fishponds in Stapleton parish, about four miles from Bristol. Her father was the Master of the Free School of that place. His five daughters grew up to follow his profession, opening, in 1757, a boarding-school in Bristol, which was very successful. Hannah's early womanhood was passed at Bristol, with occasional visits to London, where she was welcomed by the most brilliant society of the day. After the death of her dear friend Garrick, in 1779, she gradually withdrew herself from the world. In 1785 she went to live at Cowslip Green, whence she removed in 1800 to Barley Wood, near Wrington, eight miles from Bristol. Her sisters shared her home, devotedly laboring with her among the poor. Death took them from her one by one, and at last, in September, 1833, she followed them. She had removed to Clifton in order to be under the care of friends.

It is sadly to be feared that some of her once very popular works, which undoubtedly accomplished much good in their day, have passed with modern readers into the category of "books which are no books,"—

among which Charles Lamb reckoned "court calendars, directories, pocket-books, draught-boards, bound and lettered at the back, . . . and generally, all those volumes which 'no gentleman's library should be without.'" The whirligig of time brings in new fashions of thought and expression, and "the ways of literature are strewn all over with the shells of books which the public has devoured and forgotten." But to turn from the works of Mrs. More's pen and read of the works of her helping hands among the poor, is as though, in some old-time garden where the untrimmed box-borders have grown into sad confusion, and the old flowers with the odd names have ceased to bloom, we came suddenly upon the fresh wild-rose that is never out of fashion. The story of the sturdy struggles of this delicate woman with the squalor, ignorance, and indifference of that barbarous rural England of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, brings her near to us to-day, claiming a respectful admiration which modern taste hardly accords to her writings.

The following is a list of her principal works :

Poems : *The Search After Happiness. Sir Eldred of the Bower and the Legend of Sensibility. The Bas Bleu. Florio. Bleeding Rock. Bible Rhymes.*

Dramas : PERCY, *A Tragedy*, performed at Covent Garden Theatre, 1777. *Fatal Falsehood*, performed in 1779. *The Inflexible Captive.*

Prose Works : *Thoughts on the Manners of the Great. Estimate of the Religion of the Fashion-*

able World. Strictures on Female Education.
 CÆLEBS IN SEARCH OF A WIFE, 1808. *Practical*
Piety. Christian Morals. Moral Sketches.

At an early age she evinced a large aptitude for learning, and a desire for information. When her mother first began to think of teaching her to read, she found Hannah had already made considerable progress, from attending to the instructions bestowed on her elder sisters. Her childhood.

Her nurse having lived in the family of Dryden, the inquisitive mind of the intelligent child was incessantly prompting her to ask for stories about the poet ; and to her father's excellent memory she was indebted for long stories from the Greek and Roman histories. Whilst sitting on his knee, he would, to gratify her ear by the sound, repeat speeches of her favorite heroes, in their original language, afterward translating them into English.

Mr. More imparted to his daughters the rudiments both of Latin and of the mathematics, and was afterward, it is said, alarmed at the proficiency of his pupils.

MRS. ELWOOD : 'Memoirs of the Literary Ladies of England.' London : Henry Colburn, 1843.

At this early period, too, the signs of that precarious health which exercised her piety and virtue by so many trials in the course of her long life, began to appear ; and it was recorded in the family, that pain and suffering were in her at that early period without their usual attendants of fretfulness and impatience.

In her days of infancy, when she could possess herself of a scrap of paper, her delight was to scribble upon it some essay or poem, with some well-directed moral, which was afterward secreted in a dark corner where the servant kept her brushes and dusters. Her little sister, with whom she slept, was usually the repository of her nightly effusions ; who, in her zeal lest these compositions should be lost, would sometimes steal down to procure a light, and commit them to the first scrap of paper which she could find. Among the characteristic sports of Hannah's childhood, which their mother was fond of recording, we are told that she was wont to make a carriage of a chair, and then call to her sisters to ride with her to London to see bishops and booksellers ; an intercourse which we shall hereafter show to have been realized. The greatest wish her imagination could frame, when her scraps of paper were exhausted, was, that she might one day be rich enough to have a whole quire to herself ; and when, by her mother's indulgence, the prize was obtained, it was soon filled with supposititious letters to depraved characters, to reclaim them from their errors, and letters in return expressive of contrition and resolutions of amendment.

This branch of the family was attached to the established church, Mr. More himself being a staunch Tory, and what is known as a High Church-
A Puritan family. man ; but the other members of the family were Presbyterians, and the daughters of Mr. Jacob More had frequently heard their father say that he had two great-uncles captains in Oliver Cromwell's army. Jacob More's mother appears, from family tradition, to have possessed a mind of more than ordinary vigor,

She was a pious woman, and used to tell her younger relatives that they would have known how to value gospel privileges had they lived, like her, in the days of proscription and persecution, when, at midnight, pious worshippers went with stealthy steps through the snow, to hear the words of inspiration delivered by a holy man at her father's house ; while her father, with a drawn sword, guarded the entrance from violent or profane intrusion.

W. ROBERTS: 'Memoirs of Hannah More.' New York: Harper & Bros., 1834.

I would wish you a Merry Christmas as well as a Happy New-Year, but that I hate the word merry *so* applied ; it is a fitter epithet for ^{Puritan tendencies illustrated.} a *bacchanalian* than a *Christian* festival, and seems an apology for idle mirth and injurious excess.

HANNAH MORE: *Letter to her sister, from Hampton*, 1780, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

On Sunday evening I was a little alarmed ; they were preparing for music (sacred music was the *ostensible* thing), but before I had time to feel uneasy, Garrick turned round and said, "Nine,* you are a *Sunday woman* ; retire to your room—I will recall you when the music is over."

HANNAH MORE: *Letter to her sister, from Farnborough Place*, 1777, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

We spent an agreeable evening at Dr. Cadogan's,

* David Garrick used to call her "Nine," and "Your Nineship," deriving the title from the Nine Muses,

where Mrs. Montagu and I, being the only two monsters in the creation who never touch a card (and laughed at enough for it we are), had the fireside to ourselves ; and a more elegant and instructive conversation I have seldom enjoyed.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from London, 1777*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

I am going, to-day, to a great dinner ; nothing can be conceived so absurd, extravagant and fantastical as the present mode of dressing the head. Simplicity and modesty are things so much exploded, that the very names are no longer remembered. I have just escaped from one of the most fashionable disfigurers ; and though I charged him to dress me with the greatest simplicity, and to have only a very distant eye upon the fashion, just enough to avoid the pride of singularity ; yet in spite of all these sage didactics, I absolutely blush at myself.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from London, 1776*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

Again I am annoyed by the foolish absurdity of the present mode of dress. Some ladies carry on their heads a large quantity of fruit, and yet they would despise a poor useful member of society who carried it there for the purpose of selling it for bread. Some, at the back of their perpendicular caps, hang four or five ostrich feathers, of different colors, etc. Spirit of Addison ! thou pure and gentle shade arise ! thou who, with such fine humor, and such polished sarcasm, didst lash the cherry-colored hood and the party patches ; awake ! for the follies thou didst lash were

but the beginning of follies ; and the absurdities thou didst censure were but the seeds of absurdities !

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from London, 1776*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

The other night we had a great deal of company, eleven damsels, to say nothing of men. I protest I hardly do them justice, when I pronounce that they had, among them, on their heads, an acre and a half of shrubbery, besides slopes, grass-plots, tulip-beds, clumps of peonies, kitchen-gardens, and green-houses. . . . I have no doubt that they held in great contempt our roseless heads and leafless necks.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from Burgay, 1777*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

And now we are upon vanities, what do you think is the reigning mode as to powder?—only turmeric, that coarse dye which stains yellow. The Goths and Vandals, the Picts and Saxons, are come again. It falls out of the hair, and stains the skin so that every pretty lady must look as yellow as a crocus, which I suppose will become a better compliment than as white as a lily.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from Hampton, 1782*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

The other evening they carried me to Mrs. Ord's assembly ; I was quite dressed for the purpose ; Mrs. Garrick gave me an elegant cap, and ^{A humorous situation.} put it on herself ; so that I was quite sure of being smart ; but how short-lived is all human joy ! and see what it is to live in the

country! When I came into the drawing-rooms I found them full of company, every human creature in deep mourning, and I, poor I, all gorgeous in scarlet. I never recollected that the mourning for some foreign Wilhelmina Jaquelina was not over. However, I got over it as well as I could, made an apology, lamented the *ignorance* in which I had lately lived, and I hope this false step of mine will be buried in oblivion.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from London, 1780, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.*

I find my dislike of what are called public diversions greater than ever, except a play ; and when Garrick ^{Dislike of public diversions.} has left the stage, I could be very well contented to relinquish plays also, and to live in London, without ever again setting my foot in a public place.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from London, 1776, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.*

I had no less than five invitations to dine abroad to-day, but preferred the precious and rare luxury of solitude.

'Percy' is acted again this evening : do any of you choose to go? I can write you an order : for my own part, I shall enjoy a much superior pleasure—that of sitting by the fire, in a great chair.

HANNAH MORE : *Letters to her sister, from London, 1777 and 1778, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.*

On Monday I was at a very great assembly at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. Conceive to yourself one

hundred and fifty or two hundred people met together, dressed in the extremity of the fashion ; painted as red as bacchanals ; poisoning the air with perfumes ; treading on each other's gowns ; making the crowd they blame ; and not one in ten able to get a chair ; protesting they are engaged to ten other places, and lamenting the fatigue they are not obliged to endure ; ten or a dozen card-tables crammed with dowagers of quality, grave ecclesiastics, and yellow admirals ; and you have an idea of an assembly. I never go to these things when I can possibly avoid it, and stay, when there, as few minutes as I can.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from Hampton, 1782*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

With the well-known writer, Dr. Langhorne, when vicar of Blagdon, she long maintained a poetical and literary correspondence. The introduction took place in 1773, while she was recovering from an attack of ague, at Uphill, on the Somersetshire coast. The doctor was at the time taking his recreation at the neighboring and better known watering-place, Weston-Super-Mare. They often rode together upon the sands ; Miss More, as the custom then was, on the pillion behind her servant ; and when it happened that either chanced to miss the other, a paper was placed in a cleft post near the water, generally containing some quaint remark, or a few verses. On one of these occasions, the doctor committed his wit and gallantry to the sand, on which he inscribed with his cane :

*Anecdote
illustrating
her readi-
ness.*

“Along the shore
 Walked Hannah More ;
 Waves ! let this record last :
 Sooner shall ye,
 Proud earth and sea,
 Than what she writes, be past.

JOHN LANGHORNE.”

Miss More, with her riding whip, wrote immediately beneath :

“Some firmer basis, polish’d Langhorne, choose,
 To write the dictates of thy charming muse ;
 Thy strains in solid characters rehearse,
 And be thy tablet lasting as thy verse.

HANNAH MORE.”

HENRY THOMPSON : ‘Life of Hannah More.’
 Philadelphia : Carey and Hart, 1838.

His residence at Belmont was beautifully situated, and he had carriages and horses and every thing to make a visit to Belmont agreeable. He permitted his cousins to ask any young persons at the school to spend their vacations with them. Their governesses being nearly of their own age, they made choice of the two youngest of the sisters—Hannah and Patty More. The consequence was natural. She was very clever and fascinating, and he was generous and sensible ; he became attached, and made his offer, which was accepted. He was a man of large fortune, and she was young and dependent ; she quitted her interest in the concern of the school, and was at great expense in preparing and fitting herself out to be the wife of a man of large fortune. The day was fixed more than once for the marriage, and Mr. Turner each

Her early
 engagement
 to Mr. Turner.

time postponed it. Her sisters and friends interfered, and would not permit her to be so treated and trifled with. He continued in the wish to marry her; but her friends, after his former conduct, and on other accounts, persevered in keeping up her determination not to renew the engagement.

MRS. SIMMONS: *Letter* in W. Roberts' 'Memoirs of Hannah More.'

Since I wrote last, Hannah has been introduced by Miss Reynolds to Baretti, to Edmund Burke—the sublime and beautiful Edmund Burke! *Miss More* From a large party of literary persons *in London.* assembled at Sir Joshua's she received the most encouraging compliments; and the spirit with which she returned them was acknowledged by all present, as Miss Reynolds informed poor us.

. . . We have paid another visit to Miss Reynolds. She had sent to engage Dr. Percy (Percy's collection—now you know him), quite a spritely modern, instead of a rusty antique, as I expected. He was no sooner gone than Miss Reynolds ordered the coach to take us to Dr. Johnson's *very own house*; yes, Abyssinia's Johnson! Dictionary Johnson! Rambler's, Idler's, and Irene's Johnson!

. . . Miss Reynolds told the doctor of all our rapturous exclamations on the road. He shook his scientific head at Hannah and said, "She was a *silly thing*." When our visit was ended, he called for his hat (as it rained), to attend us down a very long entry to our coach, and not Rasselas could have acquitted himself more *en cavalier*.

. . . I forgot to mention, that not finding Johnson

in his little parlor when we came in, Hannah seated herself in his great chair, hoping to catch a little ray of his genius ; when he heard it he laughed heartily, and said it was a chair on which he never sat.

Tuesday evening we drank tea at Sir Joshua's with Dr. Johnson. Hannah is certainly a great favorite. She was placed next him, and they had the entire conversation to themselves. They were both in remarkably high spirits ; it was certainly her lucky night ! I never heard her say so many good things. The old genius was extremely jocular, and the young one very pleasant. You would have imagined we had been at some comedy had you heard our peals of laughter. They, indeed, tried which could "pepper the highest," and it is not clear to me that the lexicographer was really the highest seasoner.

It is nothing but "child," "little fool," "love," and "dearest." After much critical discourse, he

Dr. Johnson's rapture. turns round to me, and with one of his most amiable looks, which must be seen to form the least idea of it, he says : "I have heard that you are engaged in the useful and honorable employment of teaching young ladies," upon which . . . we entered upon the history of our birth, parentage, and education ; showing how we were born with more desires than guineas ; and how, as years increased our appetites, the cupboard at home began to grow too small to gratify them ; and how, with a bottle of water, a bed, and a blanket, we set out to seek our fortunes ; and how we found a great house, with nothing in it ; and how it was like to remain so, till looking into our knowledge-boxes, we happened to find a little learning, a good thing when land is gone, or

rather none : and so at last, by giving a little of this little learning to those who had less, we got a good store of gold in return ; but how, alas ! we wanted the wit to keep it.—“ I love you both,” cried the innamorato—“ I love you all five—I never was at Bristol—I will come on purpose to see you—what ! five women live happily together !—I will come and see you—I have spent a happy evening—I am glad I came—God for ever bless you, you live lives to shame duchesses.”

SALLY MORE : *Letters to her sisters, London, 1774*—5, 6, in ‘Memoirs of Hannah More,’ by W. Roberts.

Her ‘Search after Happiness’ had reached a sixth edition. An edition was sent from *Philadelphia*, with two complimentary poems addressed to ‘*Sir Eldred*’ and ‘*Bleeding Rock*,’ the author ; and the profits of the sale had netted £100. She thought, therefore, not without reason, that she had established sufficient literary reputation to justify her in setting a high pecuniary value on her writings. She, therefore, offered at once to Mr. (afterwards Alderman) Cadell two little poems, to form a thin quarto, after the fashion of the day, requesting to know what he would give for them, and stating at the same time that she would not part with them for “a very paltry consideration.” Mr. Cadell, though he had not seen the poems, was so well prepared to entertain high expectations, that he immediately offered to give Miss More whatever Goldsmith might have received for his ‘Deserted Village.’ This she was unable to discover, and therefore she laid her demand at forty guineas, which the popularity of the volume amply justified. It comprised ‘Sir Eldred of the Bower,’ a tale which appears to

have been suggested by her taste for ballad literature, which Percy's 'Reliques of Ancient Poetry' had revived ; and 'The Legend of the Bleeding Rock' before mentioned. The former of these pieces was honored by the revision, and even more, by the critical touch of Johnson, whose pen has furnished the stanza which now appears in it :

" My scorn has oft the dart repell'd
Which guileful beauty threw ;
But goodness heard, and grace beheld,
Must every heart subdue."

HENRY THOMPSON : 'Life of Hannah More.'

It is not possible for anything on earth to be more agreeable to my taste than my present manner of living.

Life with the Garricks in London. I am so much at my ease ; have a great many hours at my own disposal, to read my own books and see my own friends ; and, whenever I please, may join the most polished and delightful society in the world. Our breakfasts are little literary societies ; there is generally company at meals, as they think it saves time, by avoiding the necessity of seeing people at other seasons. Mr. Garrick sets the highest value upon his time of any body I ever knew. From dinner to tea we laugh, chat, and talk nonsense ; the rest of his time is generally devoted to study.

To the most eloquent expression of the eye, to the handwriting of the passions on his features, to a sensibility which tears to pieces the hearts of his auditors, to powers so unparalleled, he adds a judgment of the most exquisite accuracy, the

Admiration for Garrick.

fruit of long experience and close observation, by which he preserves every gradation and transition of the passions, keeping all under the control of a just dependence and natural consistency. . . . It was a fiction as delightful as fancy, and as touching as truth. A few nights before I saw him in *Abel Drugger*; and had I not seen him in both, I should have thought it as possible for Milton to have written 'Hudibras,' and Butler 'Paradise Lost,' as for one man to have played *Hamlet* and *Drugger* with such excellence.

I'll tell you the most ridiculous circumstance in the world. After dinner Garrick took up the Monthly Review (civil gentlemen, by the way, these monthly reviewers) and read 'Sir Eldred' with all his pathos and all his graces. I think I never was so ashamed in my life; but he read it so superlatively, that I cried like a child. Only think what a scandalous thing, to cry at the reading of one's own poetry! I could have beaten myself; for it looked as if I thought it very moving, which I can truly say is far from being the case. But the beauty of the jest lies in this: Mrs. Garrick twinkled as well as I, and made as many apologies for crying at her husband's reading as I did for crying at my 'own verses. *She* got out of the scrape by pretending she was touched at the story and I by saying the same thing of the reading. It furnished us with a great laugh at the catastrophe, when it would really have been decent to have been a little sorrowful.

HANNAH MORE: *Letters to her sisters, London, 1776*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

The sisters were one day dining at the Adelphi, at

one of Garrick's small parties, at which was present "a young gentleman of family and fortune, and greatly accomplished," who had been visiting most of the courts of Europe, and was just about to publish his travels in Spain. The rest is in the writer's own words : " Hannah sat mute ; only sometimes addressed herself to Mr. Garrick. However, this was ^{Garrick's} ~~not to last forever.~~ ^{pride in her.} Mrs. G. threatened H. to discover who she was ; but she entreated she would be silent. At length the discovery was made by the lady of the house saying, in her sweet, pretty, foreign accent, ' Pray, sir, why don't you address your Spanish to this lady, and see if she pronounces well ? ' The gentleman stared, and instantly made violent love to her in Italian, little thinking that in that language the lady was his match ; but when he made what he thought these vast discoveries, he turned to Mr. Garrick—' Why, sir, did you not tell me I was in company with a learned lady ? ' ' With a learned lady, sir,' replies the universal enchanter ; ' why, sir, that lady is a great genius ! Sir, she has published more than you ever will with all your travelling ! She is MY DRAMATIC PUPIL, sir ! ' Oh ! the poor dear petrified gentleman ! You never, madam, saw a man so astonished ; as he seems to think printing the *ne plus ultra* of all human perfection. He then paid vast attention to miss, and was quite struck when he attended to her replies, as you know she can find a pretty answer for most questions."

HENRY THOMPSON : ' Life of Hannah More.'

It is impossible to tell you of all the kindness and friendship of the Garricks ; he thinks of nothing,

talks of nothing, writes of nothing but 'Percy.' . . . When Garrick had finished his prologue and epilogue (which are excellent), he ^{Production of 'Percy.'} desired I would pay him. Dryden, he said, used to have five guineas a piece, but as he was a richer man he would be content if I would treat him with a handsome supper and a bottle of claret. We haggled sadly about the price, I insisting that I could only afford to give him a beefsteak and a pot of porter; and at about twelve we sat down to some toast and honey, with which the temperate bard contented himself.

Mr. Garrick's study, Adelphi; ten at night.—He himself puts the pen into my hand, and bids me say that all is just as it should be. Nothing was ever more warmly received. I went with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick; sat in Mr. Harris's box, in a snug, dark corner, and behaved very well; that is, very quietly. The prologue and epilogue were received with bursts of applause; so, indeed, was the whole; as much beyond my expectation as my deserts!

* * * * *

I am just returned from the second night, and it was, if possible, received more favorably than on the first. One tear is worth a thousand hands, and I had the satisfaction to see even the men shed them in abundance.

The critics (as is usual) met at the Bedford last night, to fix the character of the play. If I were a heroine of romance, and was writing to my confidante, I should tell you all the fine things that were said;

but as I am a real living Christian woman, I do not think it would have been so modest.

HANNAH MORE : *Letters to her sisters, London, 1777*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

I am very much pleased to find that 'Percy' meets with your approbation. It has been extremely successful, far beyond my expectation, and more so than Profits. any *tragedy* has been for many years. The profits were not so great as they would have been, had it been brought out when the town was full; yet they were such as I have no reason to complain of. The author's nights, sale of the copy, etc., amounted to near six hundred pounds (this is *entre nous*); and as my friend Mr. Garrick has been so good as to lay it out for me on the best security, and at five per cent., it makes a decent little addition to my small income. Cadell gave £150—a very handsome price, with conditional promises. He confesses (a thing not usual) that it has had a very great sale, and that he shall get a good deal of money by it. The first impression was near four thousand, and the second is almost sold.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to Mrs. Gwatkin, Hampton, 1778*, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

"I went," she says, "yesterday with the Wilmots to pay a visit to the coffin. The last time the same party met in the room was—to see him per-
Grief at
Garrick's
death.
form Macbeth! . . . there was room for meditation till the mind burst with thinking. His new house is not so pleasant as Hampton, nor so splendid as the Adelphi; but it is commodious enough for all the wants of the inhabitant. Besides it

is so quiet, that he never will be disturbed till the eternal morning; and never till then will a sweeter voice than his be heard." From this moment Hannah More appears to have resolved on the entire dedication of all her mental powers and acquirements, of all her influence, her time, her efforts, to the attainment of a crown which should not wither on her tomb.

HENRY THOMPSON: 'Life of Hannah More.'

Just returned from the house; the applause was as great as her most sanguine friends could wish. Miss Young was interrupted three different times, in the speech on false honor, with ^{Production of 'Fatal Falsehood.'} bursts of approbation. When Rivers, who was thought dead, appeared in the fifth act, they quite shouted for joy. The curtain fell to slow music,—and now for the moment when the fate of the piece was to be decided! The audience did her the honor to testify their approbation by the warmest applause that could possibly be given; for when Hull came forward to ask their permission to perform it again, they did give leave by three loud shouts, and by many huzzaings.

——* MORE: *Letter to her sisters, London, 1779*, in 'Memoirs of Hannah More,' by W. Roberts.

Mrs. Garrick and I read to ourselves *sans* intermission. . . . We never see a human face but each other's. Though in such deep retirement, I am never dull, because I am not ^{Life with Mrs. Garrick.} rick.

* It is not stated which of the sisters wrote the letter from which this extract is taken; Hannah was too ill to attend on the opening night of 'Fatal Falsehood.'

reduced to the fatigue of entertaining dunces, or of being obliged to listen to them. We dress like a couple of Scaramouches, dispute like a couple of Jesuits, eat like a couple of aldermen, walk like a couple of porters, and read as much as two doctors of either university.

HANNAH MORE : *Letters to her sisters, Hampton*, 1780, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

We go to-morrow to smell the lilacs and syringas **Love of the** at Hampton. I long for the sweet tran-
Country. quillity of that delicious retreat.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to Mrs. Gwatkin, London*, 1776, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

I did not think there could have been so beautiful a place [as Wimbledon Park] within seven miles of London ; the park has as much variety of ground, and is as *un-Londonish* as if it were a hundred miles off ; and I enjoyed the violets and the birds more than all the marechal powder and the music of this foolish town.

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to her sister, from London*, 1780, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

The cottage, except by the growth of the trees then planted, is little altered from its appearance in 1785, **Home at** when Miss More first took possession of it.
Cowslip
Green. It is only one story high; the roof is thatch; a smooth lawn, with a few shrubs and trees, fronts the window of the drawing-room, which looks toward the south. A border of flowers runs nearly round the walls. Situate in the midst of the bright and fertile

vale of Wrington, Cowslip Green commands a variety of exquisite views. On one side of the lawn rises the abrupt hill on which the noble mansion of Aldwick Court has since been erected. To the south spreads the rich and sylvan valley, bounded by the dark outline of the Mendips, with their warm-tinted herbage and dusky woods, casting out in bold relief the picturesque village of Blagdon, and the "Magick Garden" of Mendip Lodge with its noble terraces of

"Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view ;"

while between them the cottage roofs and venerable tower of Burrington shelter in the leafy skirts of their bold and rocky coomb.

HENRY THOMPSON : ' Life of Hannah More.'

Her ingratitude to Miss More has been superlative. The latter labored unweariedly to collect subscriptions for her, and was at expense herself for the *Her charity:* publication ; and lest the husband, who is *Episode of the Bristol milkwoman* a dolt, should waste the sum collected, *Ann Yearsley.* placed it out at interest for her as trustee, besides having washed and combed her trumpery verses, and taught them to dance in tune. The foolish woman's head, turned with the change of fortune and applause, and concluding that her talent, which was only wonderful from her sphere and state of ignorance, was marvellous genius, she grew enraged at Miss More for presuming to prune her wild shoots, and, in her passion, accused her benevolent and beneficent friend of defrauding her of part of the collected charity. . . . Am I in the wrong, madam, for thinking that these parish Sapphos had better be bound

'prentices to mantua-makers, than be appointed chambermaids to Mesdemoiselles the Muses ?

HORACE WALPOLE: *Letter to the Countess of Ossory*, 1786, in 'The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Oxford.' London : Henry G. Bohn, 1861.

Perhaps it is the best answer to your question, to describe the origin and progress of one of our schools, detached from the rest. And I select Cheddar, which ^{Account of} ~~her work at~~ ^{Cheddar.} up. After the discoveries made of the deplorable state of that place, my sister and I went and took lodging at a little public-house there, to see what we could do, for we were utterly at a loss how to begin. We found more than two thousand people in the parish, almost all very poor ; no gentry ; a dozen wealthy farmers, hard, brutal, and ignorant. We visited them all, picking up at one house (like fortune-tellers) the name and character of the next. We told them we intended to set up a school for their poor. They did not like it. We assured them we did not desire a shilling from them, but wished for their concurrence, as we knew they could influence their workmen. One of the farmers seemed pleased and civil ; he was rich, but covetous, a hard drinker, and his wife a woman of loose morals, but good natural sense ; she became our friend sooner than some of the decent and formal, and let us a house, the only one in the parish at £7 per annum, with a good garden. Adjoining to it was a large ox-house ; this we roofed and floored, and, by putting in a couple of windows, it made a good school-room. While this was doing, we went to every house in the place, and found every house a scene of the

greatest ignorance and vice. We saw but one Bible in all the parish, and that was used to prop a flower-pot. No clergyman had resided in it for forty years. One rode over, three miles from Wells, to preach once on a Sunday, but no weekly duty was done, or sick persons visited, and children were often buried without any funeral service. Eight people in the morning and twenty in the afternoon, was a good congregation. We spent our whole time in getting at the characters of all the people, the employment, wages, and number of every family ; and this we have done in our other nine parishes. On a fixed day, of which we gave notice in the church, every woman, with all her children above six years old, met us. We took an exact list from their account, and engaged one hundred and twenty to attend on the following Sunday. A great many refused to send their children, unless we would pay them for it ; and not a few refused, because they were not sure of my intentions, being apprehensive that at the end of seven years, if they attended so long, I should acquire a power over them, and send them beyond sea. I must have heard this myself in order to believe that so much ignorance existed out of Africa. While this was going on, we had set every engine at work to find proper teachers. . . . For the first year these excellent women had to struggle with every kind of opposition, so that they were frequently tempted to give up their laborious employ. They well entitled themselves to £30 per annum salary, and some little presents. We established a weekly school of thirty girls, to learn reading, sewing, knitting, and spinning. The latter, though I tried three sorts, and went myself to almost every clothing

town in the county, did not answer—partly from the exactions of the manufacturer, and partly from its not suiting the genius of the place. They preferred knitting after the school hours on week-days. The mother and daughter [the teachers employed by Miss More] visited the sick, chiefly with a view to their spiritual concerns ; but we concealed the true motive at first ; and in order to procure them access to the houses and hearts of the people, they were furnished not only with medicine, but with a little money, which they administered with great prudence. They soon gained their confidence, read and prayed to them ; and in all respects did just what a good clergyman does in other parishes. At the end of a year we perceived that much ground had been gained among the poor ; but the success was attended with no small persecution from the rich, though some of them grew more favorable. I now ventured to have a sermon read after school on a Sunday evening, inviting a few of the parents, and keeping the grown-up children. It was at first thought a very Methodistical measure, and we got a few broken windows ; but quiet perseverance carried us through.

Finding the distresses of these poor people uncommonly great (for their wages are but 1s. per day), and fearing to abuse the bounty of my friends by too indiscriminate liberality, it occurred to me that I could make what I had to bestow go much further, by instituting clubs or societies for the women, as is done for men in other places. It was no small trouble to accomplish this ; for though the subscription was only three half-pence a week, it was more than they could always raise ; yet the object appeared so important,

that I found it would be good economy privately to give widows and other very poor women money to pay their club. . . . In some parishes we have one hundred and fifty poor women thus associated. . . . We have an anniversary feast of tea, and I get some of the clergy, and not a few of the better sort of people, to come to it. We wait on the women, who sit and enjoy their dignity.

HANNAH MORE: *Letter to Mr. Wilberforce*, 1791, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

I visited Hannah More, at Cowslip Green, on Monday last, and seldom have I lived a pleasanter day. She knew my opinions, and treated them ^{A visit from} with a flattering deference; her manners ^{Southey,} are mild, her information considerable, and her taste correct. There are five sisters, and each of them would be remarked in a mixed company. They pay for and direct the education of one thousand poor children.

ROBERT SOUTHEY: *Letter*, Oct., 1795, in 'Life and Correspondence,' edited by Rev. C. C. Southey, M. A. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longman's, 1849.

We have in hand a new and very laborious undertaking, on account of its great distance from home. But the object appeared to me so important, ^{Obstacles to} that I did not feel myself at liberty to neg- ^{her work,} lect it. It is a parish, the largest in our county or diocese, in a state of great depravity and ignorance. The opposition I have met with in endeavoring to establish an institution for the religious instruction of these peo-

ple would excite your astonishment. The principal adversary is a farmer of £1000 a year, who says the lower classes are *fated* to be wicked and ignorant, and that as wise as I am I cannot alter what is *decreed*. He has labored to ruin the poor curate for favoring our cause, and says he shall not have a workman to obey him, for I shall make them all as wise as himself. In spite of this hostility, however, which far exceeds anything I have met with, I am building a house, and taking up things on such a large scale, that you must not be surprised if I get into jail for debt (even should I escape it for my irregular proceedings, which is the most to be feared). . . . Providence, I trust, will carry me through the business of this new undertaking ; for, in spite of the active malevolence we experience, I have brought already between three and four hundred under a course of instruction : the worst part of the story is, that thirty miles there and back is a little too much these short days ; and when we get there, our house has as yet neither windows nor doors ; but if we live till next summer, things will mend, and in so precarious a world as this is, a winter was not to be lost !

HANNAH MORE : *Letter to Mrs. Kennicott*, 1798, in 'Memoirs,' by W. Roberts.

It was remarked by Mrs. More that she never lost a friend but by death ; and as she continued to the last enlarging the number of this privileged order, she had, in her later years, and in her rural seclusion, less time at **Her friends**. command than she had enjoyed at Hampton, when her evenings passed in the crowded saloons of the fashionable and the literary. To save her own time,

as well as to accommodate her numerous visitors, she opened her house daily from twelve or one o'clock to three, for what she not inappropriately termed her "levee." This, however, was far from securing the rest of her time for solitude, as friends from distant quarters were frequently besetting Barley Wood, and making importunate and irresistible demands on her leisure. Ingenious, however, to do good, she now employed herself in manufacturing little useful and ornamental articles, to be sold at fancy fairs for charitable purposes; the fact that they were the produce of her industry investing them with **Her industry**, many times their intrinsic value. The same energy which distinguished her literary pursuits, was conspicuous in this humbler path of usefulness. On one occasion of this sort, she knitted so assiduously as to produce an abscess in her hand.

HENRY THOMPSON: 'Life of Hannah More.'

The energy of her mind in carrying into execution any purpose which had been adopted after sufficient consideration was very remarkable. In **Her determination**, conformity with this part of her character, her plan was, in any new resolution which involved the exercise of self-denial, to contend with the most difficult part of the undertaking first, after which she used to say that she found the remaining sacrifices comparatively easy to be submitted to. On this principle, having resolved to desist from going to the theatre about the time her play of 'Percy' was revived, she determined to make that the immediate occasion for carrying her new resolution into practice. Mrs. Siddons was then at the

height of her glory, and was to act the part of the heroine of the tragedy, a character which she was said to exhibit with remarkable success ; and Mrs. Hannah More was in the midst of a brilliant society of friends and admirers, who all attended the representation ; but here she was determined to make her first stand against this particular temptation, and to break the spell of the enchantment while standing in the centre of the magic circle.

Another anecdote will show the same principle brought into exercise on a very different occasion. As her limited income began to be sensibly diminished at one time by her travelling expenses, she determined to perform her journeys in stage-coaches ; and in order to overcome at once every obstacle that pride might interpose, she resolved to pay a visit to a nobleman on which she was about to set out, in one of these vehicles ; which, as there was a public road through the park, set her down at the door of the mansion. She has more than once described her conflicting sensations when his lordship, proceeding through a line of servants in rich liveries, came to hand her out of her conveyance—a conveyance at that time much less used than at present by persons of high respectability. Thus it was the policy of this able tactician to commence her operations by a decisive blow, whereby the main strength of the opposing foe was at once broken and dispersed, and her victory made easy and secure.

WM. ROBERTS : ‘ *Memoirs of Hannah More.*’

Her form was small and slight, her features wrinkled with age ; but the burden of eighty years had not impaired her gracious smile, nor lessened the fire of

her eyes, the clearest, the brightest, and the most searching I have ever seen. They were singularly dark—positively black they seemed as they looked forth among carefully-trained tresses of her own white hair ; and absolutely sparkled while she spoke of those of whom she was the venerated link between the present and the long past. Her manner on entering the room, while conversing, and at our departure, was positively spritely ; she tripped about from console to console, from window to window, to show us some gift that bore a name immortal, some cherished reminder of other days—almost of another world, certainly of another age ; for they were memories of those whose deaths were registered before the present century had birth.

She was clad, I well remember, in a rich dress of pea-green silk. It was an odd whim, and contrasted somewhat oddly with her patriarchal age and venerable countenance, yet was in harmony with the youth of her step and her increasing vivacity, as she laughed and chatted, chatted and laughed ; her voice strong and clear as that of a girl.

S. C. HALL : 'A Book of Memories of Great Men and Women of the Age.' London: Virtue & Co., 1871.

She was a very kind friend to me from childhood. Her notice first called out my literary tastes. Her presents laid the foundation of my library. She was to me what Ninon was to Voltaire—^{Relations with Macaulay.} begging her pardon . . . and yours for comparing myself to a great man. She really was a second mother to me. I have a real affection for her memory.

I, therefore, could not possibly write about her, unless I wrote in her praise; and all the praise which I could give to her writings, even after straining my conscience in her favor, would be far indeed from satisfying any of her admirers.

T. B. MACAULAY : *Letter to W. Napier*, in the former's 'Life and Letters,' by G. Otto Trevelyan. New York : Harper & Bros., 1876.

Have you read 'Cælebs'? It has reached eight editions in so many weeks, yet literally it is one of ^{A comment} the very poorest sort of common novels, ^{on 'Cælebs.'} with the drawback of dull religion in it. Had the religion been high and flavored, it would have been something. I borrowed this 'Cælebs in Search of a Wife,' from a very careful, neat lady, and returned it with this stuff written in the beginning :—

If ever I marry a wife
I'd marry a landlord's daughter,
For then I may sit in the bar,
And drink cold brandy-and-water.

CHARLES LAMB : *Letter to Coleridge*, in 'Final Memorials' of the former, by T. N. Talfourd. London : Edward Moxon, 1848.

I like neither her letters, nor her books, nor her character. She was that most disagreeable of all ^{George Eliot's} monsters, a blue-stocking—a monster that ^{opinion.} can only exist in a miserably false state of society, in which a woman with but a smattering of

learning or philosophy is classed along with singing mice or card-playing pigs.

GEORGE ELIOT : *Letter to J. Sibree*, 1848, in 'Life,' edited by J. W. Cross. New York : Harper & Bros., 1885.

Though I think that Mrs. More's * very great notoriety was more the work of circumstances, and the popular turn of her mind, than owing ^{Opinion of Sara Coleridge.} to a strong original genius, I am far from thinking her an *ordinary* woman. She must have had great energy of character, and a spritely, versatile mind, which did not originate much, but which readily caught the spirit of the day and reflected all the phases of opinion in the pious and well-disposed portion of society in a clear and lively manner.

SARA COLERIDGE : *Letter to Miss E. Treverer*, 1834, in the former's 'Memoir and Letters,' by her daughter. New York : Harper & Bros., 1874.

Mrs. More and her sisters had accumulated by their industry handsome competencies ; by her ^{Hannah More's} pen alone she had realized £30,000. ^{earnings.} . . . Much of her property was bequeathed to public institutions.

HENRY THOMPSON : 'Life of Hannah More.'

* In later life she was always called *Mrs.* More.

FRANCES BURNEY (MME. D'ARBLAY).

1752—1840.

FRANCES BURNEY (MME. D'ARBLAY).

Frances Burney was born at Lynn Regis, Norfolk. She was the daughter of Dr. Charles Burney, a well-known professor of music, and the admiring friend of Samuel Johnson. Her early associations are sufficiently described in Macaulay's lively essay, from which we have freely drawn. In 1778, at twenty-six, she published her first novel, *EVELINA*, which took the town by storm. Four years later it was followed by *CECILIA*. In 1786 Frances was appointed Second Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte. She resigned the position in 1791. In 1793 she married M. D'Arblay, a French refugee, an officer of noble family.

"The sisters of Shakespeare's Ophelia, Otway's Belvidera, Richardson's Pamela," says M. Taine, "constitute a race by themselves, soft and fair, with blue eyes, lily whiteness, blushing, of timid delicacy, serious sweetness, framed to yield, bend, cling." This French generalization touching Englishwomen might have been drawn from Fanny Burney. She had all the "sweetness, devotion, patience, inextinguishable affection," on which the brilliant Frenchman rings his changes. Her gift of humor, of a keen mind, seems to have been a thing apart, and not in the least to

have affected her relations with those immediately around her; she saw them always through a veil of affection and reverence. Her father, whom Macaulay so censures for his carelessness, to her is ever "my dearest father," "gay, facile and sweet"; she bows in spirit before plain, dull King George and his "sweet queen"; is tremblingly anxious to please the princesses; finds old Mrs. Delany a saint, an angel; cannot bring herself to refuse the overwhelming favor of a court position which she does not want. Yet this woman, who, as acute Mrs. Thrale phrased it, "loved the world reverentially," was as ready as the most unconventional of beings to lose that world for love. She married D'Arblay in meek defiance of her father's wish (though indeed Dr. Burney was unresentful); in defiance of public opinion—and it is difficult to realize the state of English opinion concerning Frenchmen at that date; and on a pecuniary basis which makes one smile—her pension of £100 per annum from the queen. M. D'Arblay could not present himself with her at Windsor. She was ecstatically joyful once because the king vouchsafed him recognition on the terrace. Little touches like this throughout the diary show us that she never ceased to value dross, but none the less, she was willing instantly to give it up for gold.

The record of the Arcadian life and happiness of these young people of forty-odd is delightful reading. How exquisite is D'Arblay's romantic reply to the offer of a commission in the French army, that he could only accept it on condition that he should never be required to bear arms against the countrymen of his wife! Conceive the reception of this communication by Napoleon Bonaparte!

In 1802 the D'Arblays went, with their little son, to Paris. One would like the romance to end with "they lived happy ever after." Alas, it is reality after all, not romance; and we must read Frances's deeply touching account of the death of D'Arblay at Paris in 1812. She survived him twenty-eight years; survived, indeed, their son, her "dear Alex," who died in 1832. The mother lived on lonely in London till 1840.

She published after her marriage the following works:

Brief Reflections Relative to the French Emigrant Clergy, 1793.

Edwin and Elgitha, a tragedy, 1795.

Camilla, a novel, published by subscription in 1796, from which she obtained 3,000 guineas.

The Wanderer, a tale, 1814.

Memoir of Dr. Burney, 1832.

THE DIARY AND LETTERS, which would embalm her memory even if EVELINA, CECILIA and *Camilla* were lost, was published after her death, in seven volumes. The somewhat unmerciful bulk of this work has lately been judiciously reduced by Sarah Chauncey Woolsey in an edition published by Messrs. Roberts Brothers.

At Lynn, in June, 1752, Frances Burney was born. Nothing in her childhood indicated that she would, while still a young woman, have secured **Her childhood.** for herself an honorable and permanent **hood.** place among English writers. She was shy and silent.

Her brothers and sisters called her a dunce, and not altogether without some show of reason ; for at eight years old she did not know her letters.

. . . The progress of the mind of Frances Burney, from her ninth to her twenty-fifth year, well deserves to be recorded. When her education had
Education. proceeded no further than the horn-book, she lost her mother, and thenceforward she educated herself. Her father appears to have been as bad a father as a very honest, affectionate and sweet-tempered man can well be. He loved his daughter dearly, but it never seems to have occurred to him that a parent has other duties to perform to children than that of fondling them. It would indeed have been impossible for him to superintend their education himself. His professional engagements occupied him all day. . . . Two of his daughters he sent to a seminary at Paris ; but he imagined that Frances would run some risk of being perverted from the Protestant faith if she were educated in a Catholic country, and he therefore kept her at home. No governess, no teacher of any art or of any languages was provided for her. But one of her sisters showed her how to write, and before she was fourteen she began to find pleasure in reading.

It was not, however, by reading that her intellect was formed. Indeed, when her best novels were
No novel reader. produced, her knowledge of books was very small. It is particularly deserving of observation, that she appears to have been by no means a novel reader. Her father's library was large, . . . but in the whole collection there was only a single novel, Fielding's 'Amelia.'

Dr. Burney's attainments, the suavity of his temper, and the gentle simplicity of his manners, had obtained for him ready admission to the first literary circles. . . . It would be tedious to recount the names of all the men of letters and artists whom Frances Burney had an opportunity of seeing ^{Her peculiar opportunities.} and hearing. This was not all. The distinction which Dr. Burney had acquired as a musician, and as the historian of music, attracted to his house the most eminent musical performers of that age. It was thus in his power to give, with scarcely any expense, concerts equal to those of the aristocracy. On such occasions the quiet street in which he lived was blocked up by coroneted chariots, and his little drawing-room was crowded with peers, peeresses, ministers, and ambassadors.

With the literary and fashionable society which occasionally met under Dr. Burney's roof, Frances can scarcely be said to have mingled. She was not a musician, and could therefore bear no part in the concerts. She was shy almost to awkwardness, and scarcely ever joined in the conversation. The slightest remark from a stranger disconcerted her; and even the old friends of her father who tried to draw her out could seldom extract more than a Yes or a No. Her figure was small, her face not distinguished by beauty. She was therefore suffered to withdraw quietly to the background, and, unobserved herself, to observe all that passed. . . . Thus, while still a girl, she had laid up such a store of materials for fiction as few of those who mix much in the world are able to accumulate during a long life. She had watched and listened to people of every class, from

princes and great officers of state down to artists living in garrets, and poets familiar with subterranean cook-shops. Hundreds of remarkable persons had passed in review before her, English, French, German, Italian, lords and fiddlers, deans of cathedrals, and managers of theatres.

The impulse which urged Frances to write became irresistible ; and the result was the history of *Evelina*.

Then came, naturally enough, a wish, mingled with many fears, to appear before the public. . . . She had not money to bear the expense of printing. It was therefore necessary that some book-seller should be induced to take the risk.

Dodsley refused even to look at the manuscript unless he were trusted with the name of the author. A publisher in Fleet Street, named Lowndes, was more complaisant. Some correspondence took place between this person and Miss Burney, who took the name of Grafton, and desired that the letters addressed to her might be left at the Orange Coffee-house. But, before the bargain was finally struck, Frances thought it her duty to obtain her father's consent. She told him that she had written a book, that she wished to have his permission to publish it anonymously, but that she hoped that he would not insist upon seeing it. . . . He only stared, burst out a-laughing, kissed her, gave her leave to do as she liked, and never even asked the name of her work. The contract with Lowndes was speedily concluded. Twenty pounds were given for the copyright, and were accepted by Fanny with delight.

LORD MACAULAY: 'Essay on Mme. D'Arblay,' *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1843. ('Critical and

Historical Essays.' New York: Albert Mason, 1875.

This year [1778] was ushered in by a grand and most important event! At the latter end of January, the literary world was favored with the first publication of the ingenious, learned, ^{Its publica-} and most profound Fanny Burney! . . . This admirable authoress has named her most elaborate performance, 'Evelina; or, A Young Lady's Entrance into the World.'

Perhaps this may seem a rather bold attempt and title for a female whose knowledge of the world is very confined, and whose inclinations, as well as situation, incline her to a private and domestic life. All I can urge is, that I have only presumed to trace the accidents and adventures to which a "young woman" is liable; I have not pretended to show the world what it actually *is*, but what it *appears* to a girl of seventeen: and so far as that, surely, any girl who is past seventeen may safely do? . . . My Aunt Anne and Miss Humphries being settled at this time at Brompton, I was going thither with Susan [her sister] to tea, when Charlotte [another sister] acquainted me that they were then employed in reading 'Evelina' to the invalid, my cousin Richard. This intelligence gave me the utmost uneasiness—I foresaw a thousand dangers of a discovery—I dreaded the indiscreet warmth of all my confidants. In truth, I was quite sick with apprehension, and was too uncomfortable to go to Brompton, and Susan carried my excuses. Upon her return, I was somewhat tranquillized, for she assured me that there was not the smallest suspicion

of the author, and that they had concluded it to be the work of a *man*!

Mrs. Thrale said she had only to complain it was too short. She recommended it to my mother to read!—how droll!—and she told her she would be much entertained with it, for there was a great deal of human life in it, and of the manners of the present times, and added that it was written “by somebody who knows the top and the bottom, the highest and the lowest of mankind.” She has even lent her set to my mother, who brought it home with her!

**Mrs.
Thrale's
approval.**

FRANCES BURNEY: ‘Diary and Letters,’ revised and edited by Sarah Chauncey Woolsey. Boston: Roberts Bros., 1880.

Madame D’Arblay said she was wild with joy at this decisive evidence of her literary success [Mrs. Thrale’s approval], and that she could only give vent to her rapture by dancing and skipping round a mulberry tree in the garden.

SIR WALTER SCOTT: *Diary*, November, 1826, in ‘Memoirs,’ by J. G. Lockhart. Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1871.

We introduced ourselves by buying the book, for which I had a commission from Mrs. G——. Fortunately Mr. Lowndes himself was in the shop; as we found by his air of consequence and authority, as well as his age; for I never saw him before.

**Frances
experiments
on the
publisher.**

The moment he had given my mother the book, she

asked if he could tell her who wrote it. "No," he answered; "I don't know myself." "Pho, pho," said she; "you mayn't choose to tell, but you must know." "I don't, indeed, ma'am," answered he; "I have no honor in keeping the secret, for I have never been trusted. All I know of the matter is, that it is a gentleman of the other end of the town." My mother made a thousand other inquiries, to which his answers were to the following effect: that for a great while, he did not know if it was a man or a woman; but now, he knew that much, and that he was a master of his subject, and well versed in the manners of the times. . . . I grinned irresistibly, and was obliged to look out at the shop-door till we came away.

[While ill and absent at Chesington], I received from Charlotte a letter, the most interesting that could be written to me, for it acquainted me that my dear father was at length reading my book, which has now been published six months. How this has come to pass, I am yet in the dark; but, it seems, . . . he desired Charlotte to bring him the *Monthly Review*; she contrived to look over his shoulder as he opened it, which he did at the account of 'Evelina.' He read it with great earnestness, then put it down; and presently after snatched it up, and read it again. Doubtless his paternal heart felt some agitation for his girl in reading a review of her publication! *how* he got at the name I cannot imagine.

Soon after, he turned to Charlotte, . . . put his finger on the word 'Evelina,' and saying, *she knew what it was*, bade her write down the name, and send the man to Lowndes', as if for himself. When William returned, he took the book from him, and the moment

he was gone, opened the first volume—and opened it upon the *ode* ! [dedicating the book to himself]. How Dr. Burney's great must have been his astonishment at pleasure. seeing himself so addressed ! He looked all amazement, read a line or two with great eagerness, and then, stopping short, he seemed quite affected, and the tears started into his eyes : dear soul ! I am sure they did into mine.

My father, when he took the books back to Streatham, actually acquainted Mrs. Thrale with my secret. He took an opportunity, when they were alone together, of saying that, upon her recommendation, he had himself, as well as my mother, been reading 'Evelina.'

"Well !" cried she, "and is it not a very pretty book ? and a very clever book ? and a very comical book ?" "Why," answered he, "'tis well enough ; but I have something to tell you about it." "Well ? what ?" cried she ; "has Mrs. Cholmondely found out the author ?" "No," returned he, "not that I know of ; but I believe I have, though but very lately." "Well, pray let's hear !" cried she, eagerly ; "I want to know him of all things."

How my father must laugh at the *him* ! He then, however, undeceived her in regard to that particular, by telling her it was "*our Fanny* !"

Mrs. Thrale . . . at last . . . mentioned 'Evelina.' [During F. B.'s first visit to Streatham]. "Yesterday at supper," said she, "we talked it all over, and discussed all your characters ; but Dr. Johnson's favorite is Mr. Smith. He declares the fine gentleman *manqué* was never better drawn,

Dr. Johnson's comment.

and he acted him all the evening, saying 'he was all for the ladies!' He repeated whole scenes by heart. O, you can't imagine how much he is pleased with the book; he 'could not get rid of the rogue,' he told me."

Sir Joshua, who began it one day when he was too much engaged to go on with it, was so much caught, that he could think of nothing else, and was quite absent all the day, not knowing a word that was said to him; and, when he took it up again, ^{Reynolds'} found himself so much interested in it, ^{curiosity.} that he sat up all night to finish it! Sir Joshua, it seems, vows he would give fifty pounds to know the author!

FRANCES BURNEY: 'Diary and Letters.'

And now I must tell you a little conversation which I did not hear myself till I came home; it was between Mr. Sheridan and my father. "Dr. ^{Frances} Burney," cries the former, "have you no ^{meets} Sheridan. older daughters? Can this possibly be the authoress of 'Evelina'?" And then he said abundance of fine things, and begged my father to introduce him to me.

"Why, it will be a very formidable thing to her," answered he, "to be introduced to you."

"Well, then, by and by," returned he.

Some time after this, my eyes happening to meet his, he waived the ceremony of introduction, and in a low voice said: "I have been telling Dr. Burney that I have long expected to see Miss Burney a lady of the gravest appearance, with the quickest parts." I was never much more astonished than at this unexpected address, as among all my numerous puffers the name

of Sheridan has never reached me, and I did really imagine he had never deigned to look at my trash. Of course I could make no verbal answer, and he proceeded then to speak of 'Evelina' in terms of the highest praise ; but I was in such a ferment from surprise (not to say pleasure), that I have no recollection of his expressions. I only remember telling him that I was much amazed he had spared time to read it, and that he repeatedly called it a most surprising book.

FRANCES BURNEY : '*Letter to Susan Burney,*' in '*Diary and Letters.*'

I often think when I am counting my laurels, what a pity it would have been had I popped off in my last illness, without knowing what a person of consequence I was !—and I sometimes think that, were I now to have a relapse, I never could go off with so much *éclat* ! . . . I have already, I fear, reached the pinnacle of my abilities, and therefore to stand still will be my best policy.

My work is too long in all conscience for the hurry of my people to have it produced. I have a thousand
 'Cecilia.' million of fears for it. The mere copying, without revising and correcting, would take at least ten weeks, for I cannot do more than a volume in a fortnight unless I scrawl short hand and rough hand as badly as the original. Yet my dear father thinks it will be published in a month ! . . . I have copied one volume and a quarter—no more ! Oh, I am sick to think of it ! Yet not a little reviving is my father's very high approbation of the first volume, which is all he has seen. Would you ever believe, bigoted as he was to 'Evelina,' that he now

says he thinks this a superior design and superior execution? . . . One thing frets me a good deal, which is, that my book affair has got wind, and seems almost everywhere known, notwithstanding my eagerness and caution to have it kept snug to the last. . . The book, in short, to my great consternation, I find is talked of and expected all the town over.

FRANCES BURNEY : 'Diary and Letters.'

What Miss Burney received for the copyright is not mentioned in the 'Diary', but we have observed several expressions from which we infer that the sum was considerable. We have ^{Its} success. been told that the publishers gave her two thousand pounds, and we have no doubt that they might have given a still larger sum without being losers.

LORD MACAULAY : 'Essay on Mme. D'Arblay.'

Oh ! it beats every other book, even your own other volumes, for 'Evelina' was a baby to it. Such a novel ! Indeed, I am seriously and sensibly touched by it, and am proud of her friendship who so knows the human heart.

MRS. THRALE : *Letter to Fanny Burney*, in the latter's 'Diary and Letters.'

He very emphatically congratulated me upon its most universal success ; said, "he was now too late to speak of it, since he could only echo the voice of the whole nation." . . . He ^{Burke's} criticism. then told me that, notwithstanding his admiration, he was the man who had dared to find some faults with so favorite and fashionable a work. I entreated him

to tell me what they were, and assured him nothing would make me so happy as to correct them under his direction. . . . He wished the conclusion either more happy or more miserable ; "for in a work of imagination," said he, "there is no medium." I was not easy enough to answer him, or I have much, though perhaps not good for much, to say in defense of following life and nature as much in the conclusion as in the progress of a tale ; and when is life and nature completely happy or miserable ?

FRANCES BURNEY : *Letter to Susan Burney*, in 'Diary and Letters.'

Next to the balloon [on exhibition in the Pantheon] Miss Burney is the object of public curiosity ; I had **Accounts of** the pleasure of meeting her yesterday. She ^{Frances at} **this period.** is a very unaffected, modest, sweet, and pleasing young lady : but you, now I think of it, are a Goth, and have not read 'Cecilia.' Read, read it, for shame !

ANNA L. BARBAULD : *Letter to her brother*, Jan., 1784, in 'Memoir,' by Grace A. Ellis (Oliver). Boston : J. R. Osgood & Co., 1874.

I am sure you are acquainted with the novel entitled 'Cecilia,' much admired for its good sense, variety of character, delicacy of sentiment, etc., etc. There is nothing good, amiable, and agreeable mentioned in the book, that is not possessed by the author of it, Miss Burney.

I have now been acquainted with her three years : her extreme diffidence of herself, notwithstanding her great genius and the applause she has met with, adds

lustre to all her excellences, and all improve on acquaintance.

MRS. DELANY: *Letter to Mrs. F. Hamilton*, 1786, in, the former's 'Autobiography and Correspondence,' revised and edited by Sarah Chauncey Woolsey. Boston: Roberts Bros., 1879.

In December, 1785, Miss Burney was on a visit to Mrs. Delany at Windsor. The dinner was over. The old lady was taking a nap. Her grand-niece, a little girl of seven, was playing at some Christmas game with the visitors, ^{She meets King George III.} when the door opened, and a stout gentleman entered unannounced, with a star on his breast, and "What? what? what?" in his mouth. A cry of "the king" was set up. A general scampering followed. Miss Burney owns that she could not have been more terrified if she had seen a ghost. But Mrs. Delany came forward to pay her duty to her royal friend, and the disturbance was quieted. Frances was then presented, and underwent a long examination and cross-examination about all that she had written and all that she meant to write. The queen soon made her appearance, and his majesty repeated, for the benefit of his consort, the information which he had extracted from Miss Burney. The good-nature of the royal pair could not but be delightful to a young lady who had been brought up a Tory. In a few days the visit was repeated. Miss Burney was more at ease than before. His majesty, instead of seeking for information, condescended to impart it, and passed sentence on many great writers, English and foreign. Voltaire he pronounced a monster. Rousseau he liked rather better.

"But was there ever," he cried, "such stuff as great part of Shakespeare? Only one must not say so. But what think you? What? Is there not sad stuff? What? What?"

. . . Frances was fascinated by the condescending kindness of the two great personages to whom she ^{She enters the queen's service.} had been presented. Her father was even more infatuated than herself. The result was a step of which we cannot think with patience.

. . . A German lady of the name of Haggerdorn, one of the keepers of the queen's robes, retired about this time, and her majesty offered the vacant post to Miss Burney. . . What was demanded of her was, that she should consent to be almost as completely separated from her family and friends as if she had gone to Calcutta, and almost as close a prisoner as if she had been sent to jail for a libel; that with talents which had instructed and delighted the highest living minds, she should now be employed only in mixing snuff and sticking pins; that she should be summoned by a waiting-woman's bell to a waiting-woman's duties; that she should pass her whole life under the restraints of paltry etiquette, should sometimes fast till she was ready to swoon with hunger, should sometimes stand till her knees gave way with fatigue; that she should not dare to speak or move without considering how her mistress might like her words and gestures. Instead of those distinguished men and women, the flower of all political parties, with whom she had been in the habit of mixing on terms of equal friendship, she was to have for her perpetual companion the chief keeper of the robes, an old hag from Germany, of mean understanding, of insolent manners, and of temper

which, naturally savage, had now been exasperated by disease. Now and then, indeed, poor Frances might console herself for the loss of Burke's and Windham's society, by joining in the "celestial colloquy sublime" of his majesty's equerries.

And what was the consideration for which she was to sell herself into this slavery? A peerage in her own right? A pension of two thousand a year for life? A seventy-four for her brother in the navy? A deanery for her brother in the church? Not so. The price at which she was valued was her board, her lodging, the attendance of a man-servant, and two hundred pounds a year.

LORD MACAULAY : 'Essay on Mme. D'Arblay.'

I rise at six o'clock, dress in a morning gown and cap, and wait my first summons, which is at all times from seven to near eight, but commonly in the exact half hour between them. The queen never sends for me till her hair is dressed. This, <sup>Life as Sec-
ond Keeper
of the Robes.</sup> in a morning, is always done by her wardrobe-woman, Mrs. Thielky. The queen's dress is finished by Mrs. Thielky and myself. No maid ever enters the room while the queen is in it. Mrs. Thielky hands the things to me, and I put them on. 'Tis fortunate for me I have not the handing them! I should never know which to take first, embarrassed as I am, and should run a prodigious risk of giving the gown before the hoop, and the fan before the neckerchief. By eight o'clock, or a little after, for she is extremely expeditious, she is dressed. . . I then return to my own room to breakfast. I make this meal the most pleasant part of the day; I have a book for my companion, and I

allow myself an hour for it. At nine o'clock I send off my breakfast things, and relinquish my book, to make a serious and steady examination of every thing I have upon my hands in the way of business—in which preparations for dress are always included, not for the present day alone, but for the court-days, which require a particular dress ; for the next arriving birthday of any of the royal family, every one of which requires new apparel ; for Kew, where the dress is plainest ; and for going on here, where the dress is very pleasant to me, requiring no show nor finery, but merely to be neat, not inelegant, and moderately fashionable.

That over, I have my time at my own disposal till a quarter before twelve, except on Wednesdays, when I have it only to a quarter before eleven. My rummages and business sometimes occupy me uninterruptedly to those hours. When they do not, I give till ten to necessary letters . . . and from ten to the times I have mentioned, I devote to walking.

These times mentioned called me to the irksome and quick-returning labors of the toilette. The hour advanced on the Wednesdays and Saturdays is for curling and craping the hair, which it now requires twice a week.

A quarter before one is the usual time for the queen to begin dressing for the day. Mrs. Schwellenberg then constantly attends ; so do I ; Mrs. Thielky, of course, at all times. We help her off with her gown, and on with her powdering things, and then the hair-dresser is admitted. She generally reads the newspapers during that operation. . . . She never forgets to send me away while she is powdering, with

a consideration not to spoil my clothes, which one would not expect belonged to her high station. I finish, if anything is undone, my dress, she then takes 'Baretti's Dialogues,' or some such disjointed matter, for the few minutes that elapse ere I am again summoned. I find her then always removed to her state dressing-room. Then, in a very short time, her dress is finished. She then says she won't detain me, and I hear and see no more of her till bedtime.

It is commonly about three o'clock when I am thus set at large. And I have then two hours quite at my own disposal ; but, in the natural course of things, not a moment after ! At five, we have dinner. Mrs. Schwollenberg and I are commonly *tête-à-tête* : when there is anybody added, it is from her invitation only. When we have dined, we go up stairs to her apartment, which is directly over mine. Here we have coffee till the *terracing* is over : this is at about eight o'clock. Our *tête-à-tête* then finishes, and we come down again to the eating-room. There the equerry, whoever he is, comes to tea constantly, and with him any gentleman that the king or queen may have invited for the evening ; and when tea is over, he conducts them, and goes himself, to the concert-room. This is commonly about nine o'clock.

From that time, if Mrs. Schwollenberg is alone, I never quit her for a minute, till I come to my little supper at near eleven. Between eleven and twelve my last summons usually takes place, earlier and later occasionally. Twenty minutes is the customary time then spent with the queen : half an hour, I believe, is seldom exceeded. I then come back, and after doing whatever I can to forward my dress for the next

morning, I go to bed and to sleep, too, believe me, the moment I have put out my candle and laid down my head.

FRANCES BURNEY : 'Diary and Letters.'

The 'Diary' reveals an exceptionally warm heart and a disposition very strangely compounded of good and bad. ^{An explanatory analysis.} sense and sensitiveness, quick impulse and persistent loyalty, strong powers of judgment coupled with an almost morbid self-distrust, and tastes so simple and domestic that, in spite of all her friends felt at the time, and critics have written since, about the years she wasted at court, it is difficult to escape the conviction that wherever Frances Burney's lot had fallen, her quick womanly sympathies and active interest in the affairs of life would have hindered her from giving her best time and energy to literary work. She might have found a happier slavery, perhaps, in her father's house or in a home of her own than in the royal household, but a slave to other people's whims and fancies, as well as to their tempers and serious necessities, she would probably have been wherever she had lived, for the simple reason that she was above all things affectionate, and cared more for the goodwill of those about her than for any other worldly consideration. She wrote 'Evelina' because the world amused her, and she was too shy to say in any other way how much it amused her. She wrote 'Cecilia' because the world told her it was amused by her, and that she could make her fortune by going on amusing it. But even in this second book there were indications that the natural spring was pretty nearly exhausted, while a deterioration of style betrayed the

fact that her mastery of the means of literary expression was not sufficient to keep her works up to the mark when the vivacity of the first spontaneous impulse should be spent. She might have overcome this disadvantage by laborious training of her talent ; but for this she had no inclination, or at any rate not inclination enough to conquer her fears of the contemporary prejudice against learned women. Even in the house of Mrs. Thrale, she describes herself as hiding a book under a chair-cushion, so as not to be caught in the unfeminine act of reading ; and when Johnson began to teach her Latin, she was weak enough to back out of the lessons, fearing that they would win her the reputation of a blue-stocking. Johnson liked her none the less for her timidity, and neither need we. But it is as well to remember these things when apportioning the blame for her falling away from literature. She used her literary talent first as an outlet for her surplus wit and wisdom, and next as a means of making money ; but she had not sufficient love of literature to induce her to sacrifice to it a jot of even conventional esteem.

MARY ELIZABETH CHRISTIE : 'Miss Burney's Novels,' in *Contemporary Review*, December, 1882.

The health of poor Frances began to give way ; and all who saw her pale face, her emaciated figure, and her feeble walk, predicted that her suffer- ^{Frances' ill}ings would soon be over. Frances uni- ^{health.}formly speaks of her royal mistress and of the princesses with respect and affection. The princesses

. . . were, we doubt not, most amiable women. But "the sweet queen," as she is constantly called in these volumes, is not by any means an object of admiration to us. . . . She seems to have been utterly regardless of the comfort, the health, the life of her attendants, when her own convenience was concerned. Weak, feverish, hardly able to stand, Frances had still to rise before seven, in order to dress the sweet queen, and sit up till midnight, in order to undress the sweet queen. . . . The whisper that she was in a decline spread through the court. The pains in her side became so severe that she was forced to crawl from the card-table of the old fury to whom she was tethered, three or four times in an evening, for the purpose of taking harts-horn. Had she been a negro slave, a humane planter would have excused her from work. But her majesty showed no mercy. Thrice a day the accursed bell still rang. . . . Horace Walpole wrote to Frances to express his sympathy. Boswell, boiling over with good-natured rage, almost forced an entrance into the palace to see her. Burke and Reynolds, though less noisy, were zealous in the same cause. Windham spoke to Dr. Burney. . . . At last paternal affection, medical authority, and the voice of all London crying shame, triumphed over Dr. Burney's love of courts. He determined that Frances should write a letter of resignation. . . . In return for all the misery which she had undergone, and for the health which she had sacrificed, an annuity of one hundred pounds was granted to her, dependent on the queen's pleasure. Then the prison was opened, and Frances was free once more. . . . Happy days and tranquil nights soon restored the health which the queen's

toilette and Madame Schwellenberg's card-table had impaired.

LORD MACAULAY: 'Essay on Mme. D'Arblay.'

He is tall, and a good figure, with an open and manly countenance; about forty, I imagine. . . . He seems to me a true *militaire, franc et loyal*—open as the day—warmly affectionate to his friends—intelligent, ready, and amusing in conversation, with a great share of *gaieté de cœur*, and at the same time of *naïveté* and *bonne foi*.

M. D'Ar-
blay
described.

SUSAN BURNEY (Mrs. Phillips): *Letters to Frances Burney*, in the latter's 'Diary and Letters.'

M. D'Arblay is one of the most singularly interesting characters that can ever have been formed. He has a sincerity, a frankness, an ingenuous openness of nature, that I had been unjust enough to think could not belong to a Frenchman. With all this, which is his military portion, he is passionately fond of literature, a most delicate critic in his own language, well versed in both Italian and German, and a very elegant poet. He has just undertaken to become my French master for pronunciation, and he gives me long daily lessons in reading. Pray expect wonderful improvements! In return, I hear him in English.

FRANCES BURNEY: *Letter to Dr. Burney*, February, 1793, in 'Diary and Letters.'

I have a long work, which a long time has been in hand, that I mean to publish soon—in about a year. Should it succeed . . . it may be a little portion to our Bambino. We wish, therefore, to print it for ourselves in this

At work
on
'Camilla,'
after her
marriage.

hope ; but the expenses of the press are so enormous, so raised by these late Acts, that it is out of all question for us to afford it. We have, therefore, been led by degrees to listen to counsel of some friends, and to print it by subscription. This is in many—many ways unpleasant and unpalatable to us both ; but the real chance of real use and benefit to our little darling overcomes all scruples, and, therefore, to work we go !

FRANCES D'ARBLAY : *Letter to a friend*, 1795, in 'Diary and Letters.'

I am quite happy in what I have escaped of greater severity [from the reviews], though my mate cannot **Its success.** bear that the palm should be contested by 'Evelina' and 'Cecilia' ; his partiality rates the last as so much the highest. . . . The essential success of 'Camilla' exceeds that of the elders. The sale is truly astonishing. Five hundred only remain of four thousand, and it has appeared scarcely three months.

FRANCES D'ARBLAY : *Letter to Dr. Burney*, 1796, in 'Diary and Letters.'

I will only reply by a word or two to a question you seem to ask ; how I like 'Camilla' ? I do not care to **Walpole's criticism.** say how little. Alas ! she has reversed experience, which I have long thought reverses its own utility by coming at the wrong end of our life when we do not want it. This author knew the world and penetrated characters before she had stepped over the threshold ; and, now she has seen so much of it, she has little or no insight at all.

HORACE WALPOLE : *Letter to Hannah More*, 1796.

Dr. Burney asked me about deplorable 'Camilla.' Alas ! I had not recovered of it enough to be loud in its praise.

HORACE WALPOLE : *Letter to Miss Berry*, 1796.
'The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Oxford.'
London : Henry G. Bohn, 1867.

We are going immediately to build a little cottage for ourselves. We shall make it as small and as cheap as will accord with its being warm and 'The Hermitage,' West comfortable. We mean to make this a Hamble.
property salable or lettable for our Alex.

FRANCES D'ARBLAY : *Letter to Dr. Burney*, 1796,
in 'Diary and Letters.'

I need not say how I shall rejoice to see you again, nor how charmed we shall both be to make a nearer acquaintance with Mr. Broome ; but, for Heaven's sake, my dear girl, how are we to give him a dinner ?—unless he will bring with him his poultry, for ours are not yet arrived ; and his fish, for ours are still at the bottom of some pond we know not where ; and his spit, for our jack is yet without one ; not to mention his table-linen ;—and not to speak of his knives and forks, some ten of our poor original twelve having been massacred in M. D'Arblay's first essays in the art of carpentering ;—and to say nothing of his large spoons, the silver of our plated ones having feloniously made off under cover of the whitening brush ;—and not to talk of his cook, ours being not yet hired ;—and not to start the subject of wine, ours, by some odd accident, still remaining at the wine-merchants !

With all these impediments, however, to convivial hilarity, if he will eat a quarter of a joint of meat (his share, I mean), tied up by a packthread, and roasted by a log of wood on the bricks, and declare no potatoes so good as those dug by M. D'Arblay out of our garden—and protest our small beer gives the spirits of champagne—and pronounce that bare walls are superior to tapestry—and promise us the first sight of his epistle upon visiting a new-built cottage—we shall be sincerely happy to receive him in our Hermitage.

FRANCES D'ARBLAY : *Letter to Mrs. Francis, 1797*, in 'Diary and Letters.'

For a considerable time the income on which she, her husband, and her child subsisted, did not exceed

Poverty. £125 a year. They were too independent in spirit to accept assistance from friends ; too upright to rely on contingencies ; and Madame D'Arblay pursued, in all the minutiae of domestic life, a course of self-denial such as, she wrote to her Susanna, " would make you laugh to see, though perhaps cry to hear." With all this, her mind and thoughts were never shut up in her economy. It was at this period that she originated the invitation sent by her and M. D'Arblay to **Generosity.** his friend the Comte de Narbonne, to make their cottage his home ; and it was also during these straitened circumstances that she withdrew her comedy of 'Love and Fashion' from rehearsal, in dutiful compliance with the wishes of her father ; although the management of Covent Garden had promised her £400 for the manuscript.

Queen Charlotte's expression, that she was "true as gold," was abundantly verified in her **Fidelity**. friendship.

SARAH CHAUNCEY WOOLSEY, Edr.: 'Diary and Letters of Frances Burney, Mme. D'Arblay.'

The novels give an impression of a singularly keen, clever, observant woman, with a sense of the ridiculous too much developed to be a very sympathetic, or even safe, friend.

She is seen to best advantage in the book where she appears as daughter, sister, friend, servant (there is really no other word for the position she held at court), and finally wife and mother. In the 'Diary and Letters' we not only learn how largely voluntary were the restrictions she imposed upon her literary work, but how much her private life gained in charm and usefulness by the subordination of the author's part; and, learning this, we forgive her the more easily for having partially hidden the talent which, well husbanded, might have given us more 'Evelinas' and 'Cecilias.' Delightful as 'Evelina' and 'Cecilia' are to those whose taste they suit, it is doubtful whether we should get more enjoyment out of a dozen novels of the same quality than we do out of these two. And . . . at the present moment these two are more than enough for most people.

MARY ELIZABETH CHRISTIE: 'Miss Burney's Novels.'

I attended her during the last twenty years of her

long life. She lived in almost total seclusion from all **Her old age**, but a few members of her own family ; changed her lodgings more frequently than her dresses and occupied herself laboriously in composing those later works which retain so little of the charm of her earlier writings. Mr. Rogers was the only literary man who seemed to know of her existence.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND : 'Recollections of Past Life.' New York : D. Appleton & Co., 1872.

Was introduced by Rogers to Mme. D'Arblay, the celebrated authoress of 'Evelina' and 'Cecilia'—an elderly lady, with no remains of personal beauty, but with a simple and gentle manner, a pleasing expression of countenance, and apparently quick feelings.

SIR WALTER SCOTT : *Diary*, November, 1826, in 'Memoirs,' by J. G. Lockhart.

I do not think very highly of Mme. D'Arblay's books. The style is so strutting. She does so stalk **Miss Mit-** about on Dr. Johnson's old stilts. What **ford's criti-** she says wants so much translating into **cism.** common English, and when translated would seem so commonplace, that I have always felt strongly tempted to read all the serious parts with my fingers' ends. . . . A novel should be as like life as a painting, but not as like life as a piece of wax-work. Mme. D'Arblay has much talent, but no taste. Another fault is the sameness of her characters ; they all say one thing twenty times over. . . . They have but one note.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letters to Sir W. Elford*, in 'Life,' edited by Rev. A. G. L'Estrange. London : Richard Bentley, 1870.

Madame D'Arblay is quite of the old school, a mere common observer of manners, and also a very woman. It is this last circumstance which forms the peculiarity of her writings. She ^{'A very woman.'} is a quick, lively, and accurate observer of persons and things ; but she always looks at them with a consciousness of her sex, and in that point of view in which it is the particular business and interest of women to observe them. There is little in her works of passion or character, or even manners, in the most extended sense of the word, as implying the sum total of our habits and pursuits ; her *forte* is in describing the absurdities and affectations of external behavior, or *the manners of people in company*. Her characters, which are ingenious caricatures, are, no doubt, distinctly marked, and well kept up ; but they are slightly shaded, and exceedingly uniform. Her heroes and heroines, almost all of them, depend upon the stock of a single phrase or sentiment, and have certain mottoes or devices by which they may always be known. They form such characters as people might be supposed to assume for a night at a masquerade. . . . The Braughtons are the best. Mr. Smith is an exquisite city portrait. 'Evelina' is also her best novel, because it is the shortest ; that is, it has all the liveliness in the sketches of character, and smartness of comic dialogue and repartee, without the tediousness of the story, and endless affectation of sentiment which disfigures the others.

WILLIAM HAZLITT : *Lecture on the English Novelists*, in 'Lecture on the English Poets, and the English Comic Writers,' edited by Wm. Carew Hazlitt. London : Bell & Daldy, 1869.

She is sometimes accused of being superficial, because she dares so little in the direction of the stronger and deeper passions and interests of human nature. But this criticism is itself superficial: the truer word for her is *reserved*. She shut the door upon the whole range of bold speculation and unconventional feeling, because she considered these things unfit for the novelist, and especially for the female novelist, to treat of. But her own feelings were deep, and her own interests and sympathies were wide; and in drawing her characters, though she seldom attempts to paint much—save in conventional outline—that goes below the surface, she yet shows at all times, by the firmness and consistency of her creations, that she possessed the root of the matter in understanding, if not in creative power and courage of execution.

MARY ELIZABETH CHRISTIE: 'Miss Burney's Novels.'

We are forced to refuse Madame D'Arblay a place in the highest rank of art; but we cannot deny that, in the rank to which she belonged, she had few equals, and scarcely any superior. The variety of humors which is to be found in her novels is immense; and though the talk of each person separately is monotonous, the general effect is not monotony, but a very lively and agreeable diversity. Her plots are rudely constructed and improbable, if we consider them in themselves. But they are admirably framed for the purpose of exhibiting striking groups of eccentric characters, each

governed by his own peculiar whim, each talking his own peculiar jargon, and each bringing out by opposition the peculiar oddities of all the rest.

Madame D'Arblay was most successful in comedy, and indeed in comedy which bordered on farce. But we are inclined to infer from some passages, both in 'Cecilia' and 'Camilla,' that she might have attained equal distinction in the pathetic. We have formed this judgment less from those ambitious scenes of distress which lie near the catastrophe of each of these novels than from some exquisite strokes of natural tenderness which take us here and there by surprise.

It is not only on account of the intrinsic merit of Madame D'Arblay's early works that she is entitled to honorable mention. Her appearance is an important epoch in our literary history. ^{Unique position of} 'Evelina' was the first tale written by 'Evelina,' of a woman, and purporting to be a picture of life and manners, that lived or deserved to live. Indeed, most of the popular novels which preceded 'Evelina' were such as no lady would have written; and many of them were such as no lady could without confusion own that she had read. Miss Burney did for the English novel what Jeremy Collier did for the English drama; and she did it in a better way. She first showed that a tale might be written in which both the fashionable and the vulgar life of London might be exhibited with great force, and with broad comic humor, and which yet should not contain a single line inconsistent with rigid morality. She took away the reproach which lay on a most useful and delightful species of composition. She vindicated the

right of her sex to an equal share in a fair and noble province of letters. The fact that she has been surpassed gives her an additional claim to our respect and gratitude ; for, in truth, we owe to her, not only 'Evelina,' 'Cecilia,' and 'Camilla,' but also 'Mansfield Park' and the 'Absentee.'

LORD MACAULAY : 'Essay on Mme. D'Arblay.'

The very gift that first made Miss Burney's reputation now stands in the way of her popularity. She

**Plan of
work.**

was so completely mistress of the art of letting her personages reveal their own characters, that she could afford to dispense to an unusual extent with the showman's part. She constructed her personages not from within (as is the modern fashion) but by means of a thousand minute touches showing their conversation and behavior in an infinite variety of such small circumstances as make up the daily round of existence. She positively reveled in descriptive *minutiae* of this sort. Nothing was too trivial for her, nothing too intricate in the web of petty embarrassments and mortifications and misunderstandings, that make the sum of a vast majority of human lives, and a tremendous factor of the remainder. Thanks to unusually buoyant spirits and a never-flagging sense of the ridiculous, she was constantly amused where others are only bored ; and according to the infallible rule that, given the necessary powers of expression, authors never bore till they are bored themselves, she was able to make amusing to others the commonplace things that afforded entertainment to herself. Moreover, her success in her own day was quite as much due to the

fact that her material was commonplace as to the keen perception of character, and the racy humor she displayed in working it up. Only the chosen few might appreciate her literary skill, but it needed no special gifts of culture to enter into the agitations of Evelina's first ball. However, it is necessary to understand a situation or a character before we can be amused by it. And as nothing in life changes so fast as its surface, the author who gives most pains to the finish of this, is also the first to become obsolete. Fashions in manner and dress and speech are proverbially ephemeral, and except for those in whom the antiquarian taste ^{Her heroes and heroines.} has been somehow developed, they lose charm and even meaning in passing out of date. Heroes and heroines, whose coats and gowns, and courtesies and bows, are all behind the time, of whom the colloquial talk is a forgotten jargon, and the ceremony as strange as the ritual of a foreign religion, stand no chance in competition with the crowd of ladies and gentlemen who are daily turned out by contemporary novelists, wearing costumes and talking a language of which every fold and every phrase makes a claim upon the reader's sympathy, and an item in the general index to the author's meaning. Miss Burney's personages, once so fashionable and so familiar, have grown strange now that a century has passed over their heads ; and though underneath the disguise of their Old World costumes they are still fresh and human, this is a secret only to be discovered at the cost of more careful reading than the modern world is apt to give to novels.

MARY ELIZABETH CHRISTIE : 'Miss Burney's Novels.'

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (GODWIN).

1759—1797.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (GODWIN).

Mary Wollstonecraft was born, it is supposed, in Epping Forest, on the 27th of April, 1759. The unhappy circumstances of her childhood and youth are sufficiently sketched in the following extracts. In 1778 she obtained a position as companion to a widow in Bath, where she continued for two years. In 1780, while the family were residing in Enfield, her mother died, leaving six children: Edward, Mary, Everina, Eliza, James and Charles. The younger ones were all, at some period of their lives, indebted to Mary for sisterly encouragement and pecuniary aid, for which they do not appear to have been duly grateful.

After her mother's death Mary lived for a short time at the home of her friend, Fanny Blood, at Walham Green, supporting herself by needle-work, but was soon called to the care of her sister Eliza, (then Mrs. Bishop), who was temporarily insane. On Mrs. Bishop's recovery she left her husband, and the two sisters went to Islington, where they endeavored to live by teaching. In a few months Mary removed to Newington Green, where she was successful in setting up a school. In the autumn of 1785, however, she was summoned to Fanny Blood (then Mrs. Skeys), who was ill in Lisbon; and on her return, after Fan-

ny's death, she found that it was impossible to regain her pupils. At this time she wrote a small pamphlet called *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters*, for which Mr. Johnson, a bookseller in Fleet Street, gave her ten guineas. She applied the money to the relief of Fanny Blood's parents. A situation as governess being offered her, she went to Ireland, where she remained until the autumn of 1788; she then came to London to earn her living by her pen. At this period she wrote *Mary*, a tale drawn from her own friendship with Fanny Blood, and not now to be found; *Original Stories from Real Life*, a book for children, published with cuts by William Blake; translated for Mr. Johnson 'Necker on Religious Opinions,' Salzman's 'Elements of Morality,' and Lavater's 'Physiognomy,' and contributed to the Analytical Review. In 1791 she put forth an answer to Burke's 'Reflections on the French Revolution,' entitled *A Vindication of the Rights of Man*; this was followed by her *magnum opus*, A VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.

In December, 1792, she went to Paris; was detained there by the state of public affairs; and in 1793 became, says Mr. C. Kegan Paul, "the wife" of Gilbert Imlay. Her modern biographer and defender has chosen thus to mark unmistakably his fine reverence for her purity of motive; but more than half the significance of the tragedy that followed is lost by regarding Mary as Imlay's wife. Their daughter, Fanny Imlay, was born in the spring of 1794. Imlay gradually disengaged himself from Mary; and on her return to London from a voyage to Norway and Sweden, undertaken to assist him in business affairs,

she had poignant proof of his unfaithfulness and his intention to desert her. She attempted to drown herself in the Thames. She was rescued, took up the burden of life again for Fanny's sake, and lived to marry William Godwin, the author of 'Caleb Williams' and 'Political Justice.' On the 30th of August, 1797, was born Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, afterwards the wife of Shelley; and on the 10th of September the mother died.

Mary had previously published (1794) the first volume of *An Historical and Moral View of the Origin and Progress of the French Revolution*, and *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*. After her death Godwin published *Posthumous Works by the Author of A Vindication, etc.*, comprising a horrible unfinished novel called *Maria; or, the Wrongs of Woman*, her LETTERS TO IMLAY, and to her friend, Mr. Johnson, an incomplete tale called *The Cave of Fancy*, an *Essay on Poetry*, a series of *Lessons in Spelling and Reading*, and a few fragmentary *Hints* on various subjects.

Mary Wollstonecraft has a three-fold claim on our attention. She was "the first of the new genus" of professional literary women, in contradistinction to the old race of "blue-stockings." She was the author of the VINDICATION, which, despite its faults, is "remarkable as the herald of the demand not even yet wholly conceded by all, that woman should be the equal and friend, not the slave and toy of man." Lastly, as the writer of the heart-breaking LETTERS TO IMLAY, which, notwithstanding her own views, form, as Lowell has said of her life, "the most powerful argument possible against the doctrine of the

'Elective Affinities',"—Mary Wollstonecraft can never be forgotten.

Our mosaic portrait is doubtless far from perfect ; yet who shall paint her as she was, without distortion, without idealization ? This beautiful woman, with her "Titianesque" coloring, her careless dress, and habits frugal that she might be generous—with her quick temper, sensitiveness, pride, inconsistency, deep personal tenderness ; with her melancholy, and her misunderstood religious enthusiasm ; this daughter of the Revolution, her strong head crowded with theories—some of them, one would think, to be beaten out of it by all the waves and billows that went over her. But not so ; the circumstances of her marriage with Godwin, the tendency of the work done during the brief remainder of her life, show us that we must add tenacity to her characteristics. This creature, now coarse, now fine, now harsh, and now all pity,—who shall explore her strength and weakness, her deeps and shallows ? It is natural that in an age better calculated to understand her motives than that in which she lived, a vindicator should have arisen to call up out of the past, by the name of Mary Wollstonecraft, a spirit radiant and purified, like the soul of Ianthe in 'Queen Mab,' from every stain of earthliness. But to make the woman herself live before us, as she lived in Paris, in London, in those strange days of the close of the eighteenth century—that would be a task for a pen that has dealt with character under somewhat similar conditions—the pen of Ivan Turgeneff.

Like Charlotte Brontë, she at last knew happiness before she died. But thinking of Godwin, "with his great head full of cold brains," one cannot but wish

that the gleam of sunshine at the close of her stormy life had been less "winterly."

With her very first years Mary Wollstonecraft began a bitter training in the school of experience, which was in no small degree instrumental in developing her character and forming her philosophy. There are few details of her childhood, and no anecdotes indicating a precocious genius. But enough is known of her early life to make us understand what were the principal influences to which she was exposed. Her strength sprang from the very uncongeniality of her home and her successful struggles against the poverty and vice which surrounded her.

Her father was a selfish, hot-tempered despot, whose natural bad qualities were aggravated by his dissipated habits. His chief characteristic was his instability. He could persevere in nothing. Apparently brought up to no special profession, he was by turns a gentleman of leisure, a farmer, a man of business. It seems to have been sufficient for him to settle in any one place to almost immediately wish to depart from it. The history of the first fifteen or twenty years of his married life is that of one long series of migrations.

Mrs. Wollstonecraft was her husband's most abject slave, but was in turn somewhat of a tyrant herself. She approved of stern discipline for the young. She was too indolent to give much attention to the education of her children, and devoted what little energy she possessed to enforcing their unquestioning obedience in trifles, and to making them as afraid of her displeasure as they were of their father's anger.

Mary was one of those children whose sad fate it is

to weep "in the play-time of the others." Not even to the David Copperfields and Paul Dombey's **Sad child-hood.** of fiction has there fallen a lot so hard to bear and so sad to record, as that of the little Mary Wollstonecraft. . . . Overflowing with tenderness, she dared not lavish it on the mother who should have been so ready to receive it. Instead of the confidence which should exist between mother and daughter, there was in their case nothing but cold formality. Nor was there for her much compensation in the occasional caresses of her father. Sensitive to a fault, she could not forgive his blows and unkindness so quickly as to be able to enjoy his smiles and favors. Moreover, she had little chance of finding, without, the devotion and gentle care which were denied to her within her own family. Mr. Wollstonecraft remained so short a time in each locality in which he made his home that his wife saw but little of her relations and old acquaintances ; while no sooner had his children made new friends, than they were separated from them.

Mary's existence up to 1775 had been, save when disturbed by family storms, quiet, lonely, and uneventful. As yet no special incident had occurred **Friendship with Fanny Blood.** in it, nor had she been awakened to intellectual activity. But in Hoxton she contracted a friendship which, though it was with a girl of her own age, was always esteemed by her as the chief and leading event in her existence. This it was which first aroused her love of study and of independence, and opened a channel for the outpouring of her too long suppressed affections. Her love for Fanny Blood was the spark which kindled the latent fire of her genius. . . . From the moment they met until they were separated

by poor Fanny's untimely death, Mary never wavered in her devotion and its active expression, nor could the vicissitudes and joys of her later life destroy her loving loyalty to the memory of her first and dearest friend. "When a warm heart has strong impressions," she wrote in a letter long years afterward, "they are not to be effaced. Emotions become sentiments; and the imagination renders even transient sensations permanent, by fondly retracing them. I cannot without a thrill of delight recollect views I have seen, which are not to be forgotten, nor looks I have felt in every nerve, which I shall never more meet. The grave has closed over a dear friend, the friend of my youth; still she is present with me, and I hear her soft voice warbling as I stray over the heath."

ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL: 'Life of Mary Wollstonecraft.' (Famous Women Series.) Boston: Roberts Bros., 1884.

It is singularly unfortunate that Mary Wollstonecraft was fated, as it were, to see the unattractive side of almost all the great institutions of society ^{Unfortunate} with which she was brought into contact: ^{experience.} marriage, education, particularly religious education as administered at Eton, and aristocratic life. Her views on all these subjects were colored by her own personal experiences. She generalized from particulars, and never suspected that such a one-sided view must be partially unfair.

C. KEGAN PAUL: *Prefatory Memoir* to Mary Wollstonecraft's 'Letters to Imlay.' London: C. Kegan Paul & Co., 1879.

[The family life of the Blood household, of which

Mary was for a time, after her mother's death, an inmate, was as utterly unhappy as that of **Impressions of married life.** the Wollstonecrafts: Mr. Blood being "a ne'er-do-well and a drunkard." Mary was "an immediate witness" of similar and still more painful scenes in the home of her sister Eliza, who had married a Mr. Bishop, a man described by one of his own friends as "either a lion or a spaniel—" fawning abroad, tyrannical at home. I subjoin extracts from two of Mary's letters to her other sister, Everina, which seem to me to illustrate her experience more forcibly than the narrative of her biographers.]

December, 1783.

Poor Eliza's situation almost turns my brain. I can't stay and see this continual misery, and to leave her to bear it by herself without anyone to comfort her, is still more distressing. . . . Nothing can be done till she leaves the house. I have been some time deliberating on this, for I can't help pitying B., but misery must be his portion at any rate till he alters himself, and that would be a miracle. . . . I tell you she will soon be deprived of reason.

January, 1784.

Here we are, Everina; but my trembling hand will scarce let me tell you so. Bess is much more composed than I expected her to be; but . . . I was afraid in the coach she was going to have one of her flights, for she bit her wedding-ring to pieces. . . . My heart beats time with every carriage that rolls by, and a knocking at the door almost throws me into a fit. I hope B. will not discover us, for I could sooner face a lion.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT: *Letters*, in 'William

Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul. Boston : Roberts Bros., 1876.

[Mary spent some time at Eton as the guest of Mr. Prior, Assistant Master, through whom she subsequently obtained a situation as governess in the family of Lord Kingsborough.]

ETON, Oct., 1787.

I could not live the life they lead at Eton ; nothing but dress and ridicule going forward. . . . Witlings abound and puns fly about like crackers, **Impressions** though you would scarcely guess they had **of Eton.** any meaning in them, if you did not hear the noise they create. So much company without any sociability would be to me an insupportable fatigue. . . . Vanity in one shape or other reigns triumphant.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : *Letter to her sister*, in 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul.

In great schools, what can be more prejudicial to the moral character than the system of tyranny and abject slavery which is established among the boys, to say nothing of the slavery to forms, which makes religion worse than a farce ? For what good can be expected from the youth who receives the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to avoid forfeiting a guinea, which he probably afterward spends in some sensual manner ?

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman.' London : Printed for J. Johnson, No. 72 St. Paul's Churchyard, 1792.

[The following letter was written in Ireland, while Mary was governess to the daughters of Lord Kingsborough, at a salary of £40 a year.]

MITCHELSTOWN, Nov., 1787.

Confined to the society of a set of silly females, I have no social converse, and their boisterous spirits and unmeaning laughter exhaust me, not forgetting hourly domestic bickerings. The topics of matrimony and dress take their turn, not in a very sentimental style—alas, poor sentiment ! it has no residence here. . . . Lady K.'s passion for animals fills up the hours which are not spent in dressing. All her children have been ill—very disagreeable fevers. Her ladyship visited them in a formal way, though their situation called forth my tenderness, and I endeavored to amuse them, while she lavished awkward fondness on her dogs. I think now I hear her infantine lisps. She rouges—and, in short, is a fine lady, without fancy or sensibility.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : *Letter to her sister*, in 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul.

Mr. Johnson [the publisher], whose uncommon kindness, I believe, has saved me from despair and vexation I shrink back from, and fear to encounter, assures me that if I exert my talents in writing, I may support myself in a comfortable way. I am then going to be the first of a new genus. I tremble at the attempt ; yet if I fail I only suffer ; and should I succeed, my dear girls [her sisters Eliza and Everina] will ever in sickness have a home and a refuge, where for a few months in the

Adopts literature as a profession.

year they may forget the cares that disturb the rest.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : *Letter to her sister*, 1788, in 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul.

Fuseli found in her a philosophical sloven : her usual dress being a habit of coarse cloth, black worsted stockings, and a beaver at this pe-
hat, with her hair hanging lank about ^{Dress, etc.,} ^{riod.}
her shoulders.

When the Prince Talleyrand was in this country, in a low condition with regard to his pecuniary affairs, and visited her, they drank their tea, and the little wine they took, indiscriminately from tea-cups.*

JOHN KNOWLES : 'The Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli.' London : Henry Colburn & Richard Bentley, 1831.

"The main argument" of the work "is built on this simple principle, that if woman be not prepared by education to become the companion of
man, she will stop the progress of knowl- ^{Account of} 'A Vindica-
edge, for truth must be common to all, or ^{tion,' etc.}
it will be inefficacious with respect to its influence on general practice. And how can woman be expected to co-operate, unless she know why she ought to be virtuous?—unless freedom strengthen her reason till she comprehend her duty, and see in what manner it is connected with her real good. If children are to be educated to understand the true principle of

* While denying herself gowns and wine-glasses Mary was, however, generously assisting her father, brothers and sisters.

patriotism, their mother must be a patriot ; and the love of mankind, from which an orderly train of virtues springs, can only be produced by considering the moral and civil interest of mankind ; but the education and situation of woman at present shuts her out from such investigations."

In the carrying out of this argument the most noticeable fact is the extraordinary plainness of speech, and this it was which caused all or nearly all the outcry. For Mary Wollstonecraft did not, as has been supposed, attack the institution of marriage, she did not assail orthodox religion, she did not directly claim much which at the present day is claimed for women by those whose arguments obtain respectful hearing. The book was really a plea for equality of education, a protest against being deemed only the plaything of man, an assertion that the intellectual intercourse was that which should chiefly be desired in marriage, and which made its lasting happiness. . . . It may, however, be admitted that her frankness on some subjects is little less than astounding.

C. KEGAN PAUL: 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries.'

A plainness of speech, amounting in some places to coarseness, and a deeply religious tone, are to many **Plainness of speech.** of modern readers the most curious features of the book. A century ago men and women were much more straightforward in their speech than we are to-day. They were not squeamish. Therefore, when it came to serious discussions for moral purposes, there was little reason for writers to be timid. . . . Hers is the plain speaking of the Jew-

ish law-giver, who has for end the good of man ; and not that of an Aretino, who rejoices in it for its own sake.

Even more remarkable than this boldness of expression is the strong vein of piety running through her arguments. Religion to her was as important as it was to a Wesley or a Bishop Watts. The equality of man, in her eyes, would have been of small importance had it not been instituted by man's Creator. . . . If women were without souls, they would, notwithstanding their intellects, have no rights to vindicate. If the Christian heaven were like the Mahometan paradise, then they might indeed be looked upon as slaves and playthings of beings who are worthy of a future life, and hence are infinitely their superiors. But, though sincerely pious, she despised the meaningless forms of religion as much as she did social conventionalities, and was as free in denouncing them.

ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL: 'Life of Mary Wollstonecraft.'

At this period a man whose name is now forgotten wished to make Mary his wife. Her treatment of him was characteristic. He could not have *Mary's view* known her very well, or else he would not *of marriage*. have been so foolish as to represent his financial prosperity as an argument in his favor. For a woman to sell herself for money, even when the bargain was sanctioned by the marriage ceremony, was, in her opinion, the unpardonable sin. Therefore, what he probably intended as an honor, she received as an insult. She declared that it must henceforward end her acquaintance, not only with

him, but with the third person through whom the offer was sent. Her letters in connection with this subject bear witness to the sanctity she attached to the union of man and wife. Her view in this relation cannot be too prominently brought forward, since, by manifesting the purity of her principles, light is thrown on her subsequent conduct. In her first burst of wrath she unbosomed herself to her ever-sympathetic confidant, Mr. Johnson :

“Mr. — called on me just now. Pray did you know his motive for calling? I think him impertinently officious. He had left the house before it had occurred to me in the strong light it does now, or I should have told him so. My poverty makes me proud. I will not be insulted. . . . Pray tell him that I am offended, and do not wish to see him again. . . . I can force my spirit to leave my body, but it shall never bend to support that body. God of heaven, save thy child from this living death ! I scarcely know what I write. My hand trembles ; I am very sick—sick at heart.”

ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL : ‘Life of Mary Wollstonecraft.’

There is no reason to doubt that if Mr. Fuseli had been disengaged at the period of their acquaintance,

Her relations with Fuseli. he would have been the man of her choice. . . . One of her principal inducements to this step [her visit to France in 1792] related, I believe, to Mr. Fuseli. She had at first considered it as reasonable and judicious to cultivate what I may be permitted to call a platonic affection for him ; but she did not, in the sequel, find all the satisfaction in this plan, which

she had originally expected from it. . . . She conceived it necessary to snap the chain of this association in her mind ; and, for that purpose, determined to seek a new climate, and mingle in different scenes.

WILLIAM GODWIN : 'Memoir of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman,' quoted in 'Life of Mary Wollstonecraft,' by E. R. Pennell.

The American community in Paris did not of course share the suspicion, dislike and danger which were the lot of the English. One of these Americans, Captain Gilbert Imlay, became acquainted with Mary in the spring of 1793. . . . Imlay had entered into various commercial speculations, of which the centre appears to have been Havre, and his trade was with Norway and Sweden, presumably in timber, since that industry had mainly attracted him in America. At the time of which we speak he was successful in commerce, and he had considerable command of money. The kindness he showed Mary Wollstonecraft disposed her to look on him favorably ; she soon gave him a very sincere affection, and consented to become his wife.

With Gilbert Imlay.

I use this word deliberately, although no legal ceremony ever passed between them. Her view was that a common affection was marriage, and that the marriage tie should not bind after the death of love, if love should die. It is probable, however, that only a series of untoward circumstances made her act upon her opinions. A legal marriage with Imlay was certainly difficult, apparently impossible. Her position as a British subject was full of danger—a marriage would have forced her openly to declare herself as such. It

is a strong confirmation of the view here taken to find that Madame de Staël, who, if any one, knew the period of which we are speaking, makes a like fact the sole obstacle to the marriage of Lord Nelvil and Madame D'Arbigny. ('Corinne, ou l'Italie,' *vol. ii, p. 63*. 8th Edition. Paris: 1818.) It may be doubted whether the ceremony, if any could have taken place, would have been valid in England. Passing as Imlay's wife, without such preparatory declaration, her safety was assured, and as his wife she was acknowledged by him. Charles Wollstonecraft wrote from Philadelphia that he had seen a gentleman who knew his sister in Paris, and that he was "informed that she is married to Captain Imlay, of this country." Long after the period at which we have now arrived, when Imlay's affection had ceased, and his desertion of Mary had practically begun, he entrusted certain important business negotiations to her, and speaks of her in a legal document as "Mary Imlay, my best friend and wife," a document which in many cases and countries would be considered as constituting a marriage. She believed that his love, which was to her sacred, would endure. No one can read her letters without seeing that she considered herself, in the eyes of God and man, Imlay's wife. Religious as she was and with a strong moral sense, she yet made the grand mistake of supposing that it is possible for one woman to undo the consecrated custom of ages, to set herself in opposition to the course of society, and not be crushed by it. And she made the no less fatal mistake of judging Imlay by her own standard, and thinking that he was as true, as impassioned, as self-denying as herself.

C. KEGAN PAUL: *Prefatory Memoir* to 'Mary Wollstonecraft's Letters to Imlay.'

I never wanted but your heart—that gone, you have nothing more to give. Had I only poverty to fear, I should not shrink from life. Forgive me then, if I say, that I shall consider any direct or indirect attempt to supply my necessities, as an insult which I have not merited, and as rather done out of tenderness for your own reputation, than for me. Her farewell well to Imlay.

My child may have to blush for her mother's want of prudence, and may lament that the rectitude of my heart made me above vulgar precautions; but she shall not despise me for meanness. You are now perfectly free. God bless you!

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT: 'Letters to Imlay.'
(London: November, 1795.)

Godwin met her at the moment when she was deeply depressed by the ingratitude of one utterly incapable of appreciating her excellence; She meets Godwin. who had stolen her heart, and availed himself of her excessive and thoughtless generosity and lofty independence of character, to plunge her in difficulties and then desert her. Difficulties, worldly difficulties, indeed, she set at nought, compared with her despair of good, her confidence betrayed, and when once she could conquer the misery that clung to her heart, she struggled cheerfully to meet the poverty that was her inheritance, and to do her duty by her darling child.

MARY SHELLEY: quoted in 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries.'

The partiality we conceived for each other was in

that mode which I have always considered as the purest and most refined style of love. It grew with equal advances in the mind of each. It would have been impossible for the most minute observer to have said who was before and who after. One sex did not take the priority which long-established custom has awarded it, nor the other overstep that delicacy which is so severely imposed. I am not conscious that either party can assume to have been the agent or the patient, the toil-spreader or the prey in the affair. When, in the course of things the disclosure came, there was nothing in a manner for either party to disclose to the other. It was friendship melting into love.

WILLIAM GODWIN : 'Memoir of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman,' quoted in 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul.

Like her mind, her beauty would appear to have ripened late. In July, 1792, Mrs. Bishop says in a letter to Everina that Charles [their brother] informs her "that Mrs. Wollstonecraft had grown quite handsome." [Mary "took the brevet rank of *Mrs.*" after the issue of 'The Rights of Woman,' "which had made her in some degree a public character."] The grudging admission is more than confirmed by her portrait by Opie, now in the possession of Sir Percy Shelley, which was painted for Godwin during the brief period of her marriage ; long, therefore, after she had reached mature age, and when all the waves and storms of her sorrows had gone over her. More than one print was engraved of that por-

trait, in which is well preserved its tender, wistful, child-like, pathetic beauty, with a look of pleading against the hardness of the world, which I know in one only other face, that of Beatrice Cenci. But those prints can give no notion of the complexion, rich, full, healthy, vivid, of the clear brown eyes and masses of brownish auburn hair. The fault of the face was that one eyelid slightly drooped.

C. KEGAN PAUL: *Prefatory Memoir* to 'Mary Wollstonecraft's Letters to Imlay.'

Mr. Kegan Paul, in the spring of 1884, showed the author of this life a lock of Mary Wollstonecraft's hair. It is wonderfully soft in texture, and in color a rich auburn, turning to gold in the sunlight.

ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL: 'Life of Mary Wollstonecraft.'

I return you the Italian manuscript; but do not hastily imagine that I am indolent. I would not spare any labor to do my duty; that single ^{Her consci-}thought would solace me more than any ^{entiousness.} pleasures the senses could enjoy. I find I could not translate the manuscript well. . . . I cannot bear to do anything I cannot do well; and I should lose time in the vain attempt.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT: *Letter to Mr. Johnson*, in 'Posthumous Works of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman.'

London: Printed for J. Johnson, No. 72 St. Paul's Churchyard; and G. G. and J. Robinson, Paternoster Row, 1798.

I long for a little peace and *independence*! Every obligation we receive from our fellow-creatures is a new shackle, takes from our native freedom and debases the mind, makes us mere earth-worms. I am not fond of grovelling!

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT: *Letter to Mr. Johnson*, 1788, in 'Posthumous Works.'

I have dearly paid for one conviction. Love, in some minds, is an affair of sentiment, arising from the same delicacy of perception (or taste) as renders them alive to the beauties of nature, poetry, etc., alive to the charms of those evanescent graces that are, as it were, impalpable — they must be felt, they cannot be described. Love is a want of my heart.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT: 'Letters to Imlay.'

I can not live without loving my fellow-creatures; nor can I love them without discovering some merit.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT: *Letter to Mr. Johnson*, in 'Posthumous Works.'

It is . . . an affection for the whole human race that makes my pen dart rapidly along to support what I believe to be the cause of virtue.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT: *Dedication* of 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman.'

I will own to you that, feeling extreme tenderness for my little girl, I grow sad very often when I am playing with her, that you are not here to observe with me how her mind unfolds, and her little

heart becomes attached ! These appear to me to be true pleasures, and still you suffer them to escape you.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : 'Letters to Imlay.'

She was, I have been told by an intimate friend, very pretty and feminine in manners and person ; much attached to those very observances she decries in her works ; so that if any gentleman did not fly to open the door as she approached it, or take up the handkerchief she dropped, she showered on him the full weight of reproach and displeasure ; an inconsistency she would have doubtless despised in a disciple.

MRS. ELWOOD (quoting a communication from "a well-known living writer") : 'Memoirs of the Literary Ladies of England.' London : Henry Colburn, 1843.

Previous to your departure, I requested you not to torment me by leaving the day of your return undecided. But whatever tenderness you took away with you seems to have evaporated on the journey. . . . In short, your being so late to-night, and the chance of your not coming, shows so little consideration, that unless you suppose me to be a stick or a stone, you must have forgot to think, as well as to feel, since you have been on the wing.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (GODWIN) : *Letter to Wm. Godwin*, in 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul.

It gives me the sincerest satisfaction to find that you look for comfort where only it is to be met with, and that Being in whom you trust will not desert you. Be not cast down, while we

Inconsistency.

Irritability.

Religious spirit.

are struggling with care, life slips away, and, through the assistance of Divine grace, we are obtaining habits of virtue that will enable us to relish those joys that we cannot now form any idea of.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : *Letter to George Blood*, 1785.

[After Fanny's death :] Could I not look for comfort where only 'tis to be found, I should have been mad before this, but I feel that I am supported by that Being who alone can heal a wounded spirit.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : *Letter to her sister*, 1785. In 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul.

Love to man leads to devotion—grand and sublime images strike the imagination—God is seen in every floating cloud, and comes from the misty mountain to receive the noblest homage of an intelligent creature—praise. How solemn is the moment, when all affections and remembrances fade before the sublime admiration which the wisdom and goodness of God inspires, when he is worshipped in a *temple not made with hands*, and the world seems to contain only the mind that formed, and the mind that contemplates it ! These are not the weak responses of ceremonial devotion.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : *Essay on Poetry, and our Relish for the Beauties of Nature*, in 'Posthumous Works.'

Few can walk alone. The staff of Christianity is the necessary support of human weakness. An ac-

quaintance with the nature of man and virtue, with just sentiments on the attributes, would be sufficient, without a voice from heaven, to lead some to virtue, but not the mob.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT : *Hints*, in 'Posthumous Works.'

Mary Wollstonecraft was one of those beings who appear once perhaps in a generation, to gild humanity with a ray which no difference of opinion ~~Her charac-~~ nor chance of circumstances can cloud. ^{ter sketched} ^{by her} Her genius was undeniable. She had been ^{daughter.} bred in the hard school of adversity, and having experienced the sorrows entailed on the poor and the oppressed, an earnest desire was kindled within her to diminish these sorrows. Her sound understanding, her intrepidity, her sensibility, and eager sympathy, stamped all her writings with force and truth, and endowed them with a tender charm that enchants while it enlightens. She was one whom all loved who had ever seen her. . . . "Open as day to melting charity," with a heart brimful of generous affection, yearning for sympathy, she had fallen on evil days, and her life had been one course of hardship, poverty, lonely struggle, and bitter disappointment.

MARY SHELLEY : quoted in 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul.

Of all the lions or *literati* I have seen here, Mary Imlay's countenance is the best, infinitely the best : the only fault in it is an expression somewhat similar to what the prints of Horne ^{Appearance.} Tooke display—an expression indicating superiority ;

not haughtiness, not sarcasm, in Mary Imlay, but still it is unpleasant. Her eyes are light brown, and although the lid of one of them is affected by a little paralysis, they are the most meaning I ever saw. . . . As for Godwin himself, he has large, noble eyes, and a *nose*—oh, most abominable nose! Language is not vituperative enough to describe the effect of its downward elongation.

ROBERT SOUTHEY: *Letter to J. Cottle, March, 1797*, in the former's 'Life and Correspondence,' edited by Rev. C. C. Southey, M. A. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1849.

Coleridge asked me if I had ever seen Mary Wollstonecraft, and I said, I had once for a few moments, and that she seemed to me to turn off **Mary and Godwin.** Godwin's objection to something she advanced with quite a playful, easy air. He replied that "this was only one instance of the ascendancy which people of imagination exercised over those of mere intellect." . . . He had a great idea of Mrs. Wollstonecraft's powers of conversation; none at all of her talents for book-making.

WILLIAM HAZLITT: *My First Acquaintance with Poets*, in 'Sketches and Essays,' edited by Wm. Carew Hazlitt. London: Bell and Daldy, 1869.

And now Mary Wollstonecraft had a season of real calm in her stormy life. Godwin for once only in his life was stirred by a real passion, and his **Their married life.** admiration for his wife equalled his affection. The very slight clouds which arose now and then were of a transient character, and sprang from Mary

Wollstonecraft's excessive sensitiveness and eager quickness of temper. These were, perhaps, occasionally tried by Godwin's confirmed bachelor habits, and also by the fact that he took *au pied de la lettre* all that she had said about the independence of women, when in truth she leant a good deal on the aid of others. In some respects she was content to acquiesce in his bachelor ways ; they adopted a singular device for their uninterrupted student life. Godwin's strong view of the possibility that people may weary of being always together, led him to take rooms in a house about twenty doors from that in the Polygon, Somers Town, which was their joint home. To this study he repaired as soon as he rose in the morning, rarely even breakfasting at the Polygon, and here also he often slept. Each was engaged in his and her own literary occupations, and they seldom met, unless they walked out together, till dinner-time each day.

C. KEGAN PAUL: *Prefatory Memoir* to 'Mary Wollstonecraft's Letters to Imlay.'

Adieu, thou excellent woman ! thou reverse of that hyena in petticoats, Mrs. Wollstonecraft ; who to this An 'Alecto.' day discharges her ink and gall on Maria Antoinette, whose unparalleled sufferings have not yet stanchd that Alecto's blazing ferocity.

HORACE WALPOLE: *Letters to Hannah More*, 1795, in the former's 'Letters,' edited by Peter Cunningham. London : Henry G. Bohn, 1861.

Thank Providence for the tranquillity and happiness we enjoy in this country, in spite of the philoso-

phizing serpents we have in our bosom, the Paines, the Tookes, and the Wollstonecrafts.

HORACE WALPOLE : *Letter to Hannah More*, 1792, in 'Memoirs of Hannah More,' by W. Roberts. New York : Harper & Bros., 1834.

I saw her three or four times when she was Mrs. Godwin, and never saw a woman who would have been better fitted to do honor to her sex, ^{An opposite view.} if she had not fallen on evil times, and into evil hands. But it is hardly possible for any one to conceive what those times were, who has not lived in them.

ROBERT SOUTHEY : 'Correspondence with Caroline Bowles.' Dublin : Hodges, Figgis & Co. London : Longmans, Green & Co., 1881.

Southey is said to have had her portrait hanging in his study ; and he wrote of her as one

"Who among women left no equal mind
When from the world she passed ; and I could weep
To think that *she* is to the grave gone down !"

MARY W. GODWIN (SHELLEY).

1797—1851.

MARY W. GODWIN (SHELLEY).

Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin was born on the 30th of August, 1797. "Two angels, one of Life and one of Death," together entered the door of William Godwin. Long after, Shelley wrote :

" They say that thou wert lovely from thy birth,
Of glorious parents thou aspiring child :
I wonder not—for One then left this earth
Whose life was like a setting planet mild,
Which clothed thee in the radiance undefiled
Of its departing glory."

A spirit akin to that of Greek tragedy informs the double story of mother and daughter. Mary Godwin inherited her fate. The peculiar reverence in which she must necessarily have held the mother who had died to give her life, the implicit confidence with which she must have received that mother's doctrines, as set forth in her life and preserved in her books,—this was the strongest determining influence in the life of the girl, Mary Godwin. When, at the age of seventeen, she unhesitatingly plighted her faith to a man already bound by the laws of society to another, there is significance in the fact that their hands were clasped over her mother's grave

—the spot which a woman of opposite traditions must have shunned with shame at such a moment. That sacred place seemed fittest for the strange betrothal of Mary Godwin, who had no doubt that the mother who there slept would have smiled upon the lovers. Censure of this step has properly no place in a sketch of Mary Godwin Shelley; the entire responsibility rests with Shelley and her parents; her action was simply an inevitable result.

From July 28, 1814, till the fatal 8th of the same month in 1822, her life was one with Shelley's. Immeasurably greater as he was, we may yet claim for his wife that she influenced his genius in one respect and in one instance: it was her persuasion that led him, in 'The Cenci,' closer to realities, and she regarded that work as a promise of the warmer grasp of human interests on his part that might at last "touch the chord of sympathy between him and his countrymen."

She was formally married to Shelley in 1816, on the death of Harriet Shelley. Robbed of her husband by death in 1822, Mary returned to London in the following year for the sake of Percy, her only surviving child. Her own wishes would have led her to remain in Italy. For some time she resided with her father, but subsequently removed to Kentish Town, and then to Harrow, that she might be near her boy at school.

FRANKENSTEIN had been published in 1818; and Godwin saw in it that power which induced him to advise her, in this her time of need, to turn to literature as a resource. She worked hard with her pen to meet the expenses of her son's education, and also contributed to the support of Godwin, now old and

failing. She sent her father, at a time when he was greatly embarrassed, her novel *Valperga* in MS., begging him to publish it and use the proceeds as his own. The generosity of this gift reminds us of her dead mother. This novel was published in 1823; *The Last Man*, in 1824; *Perkin Warbeck*, in 1830; *Lodore*, in 1835; and *Falkner*, in 1837. Mrs. Shelley also wrote most of the Italian and Spanish lives in Lardner's Encyclopedia, and two volumes of travels entitled *Rambles in Germany and Italy*; and edited (1839-40) Shelley's works and his letters, by far her most important service to literature. Her son became Sir Percy Shelley on the death of his grandfather in 1844.

On the 21st of February, 1851, Mary Shelley closed a life that long had "crept on a broken wing." We may believe that she rejoiced at the coming of the hour, when, in Shelley's own words, "Life should no more divide what death could join together."

She appears to have differed from her mother in possessing a greater delicacy, more imaginativeness, something less of intellectual boldness and independence. She had, however, all Mary Wollstonecraft's tendency to melancholy: "I fear you are a Wollstonecraft," the equable Godwin wrote her. She endeavored, in her happier days, to guard against this evil by mingling in society, where she was animated and charming. Henry Crabb Robinson mentions her at Godwin's in 1823, looking "elegant and sickly and young"; one calls to mind the description of Shelley, "like some elegant flower drooping on its stem." Robinson also relates what he had heard from Harriet Martineau, that Mrs. Shelley "never had asked a favor

of any one, and never would." This is a touch of her mother's pride, intensified.

Your enquiries relate principally to the two daughters of Mary Wollstonecraft. They are neither of them brought up with an exclusive attention to the system and ideas of their mother. I lost her in 1797, and in 1801 I married a second time. One among the motives which led me to choose this was, the feeling I had in myself of an incompetence for the education of daughters. The present Mrs. Godwin has great strength and activity of mind, but is not exclusively a follower of the notions of their mother; and indeed, having formed a family establishment without having a previous provision for the support of a family, neither Mrs. Godwin nor I have leisure enough for reducing novel theories of education to practice, while we both of us honestly endeavor, as far as our opportunities will permit, to improve the mind and characters of the younger branches of our family.

Of the two persons to whom your inquiries relate, my own daughter is considerably superior in capacity to the one her mother had before. Fanny, the eldest, is of a quiet, modest, unshowy disposition, somewhat given to indolence, which is her greatest fault, but sober, observing, peculiarly clear and distinct in the faculty of memory, and disposed to exercise her own thoughts and follow her own judgment. Mary, my daughter, is the reverse of her in many particulars. She is singularly bold, somewhat imperious, and active of mind. Her desire of knowledge is great, and her

perseverance in every thing she undertakes almost invincible. My own daughter is, I believe, very pretty ; Fanny* is by no means handsome, but in general prepossessing.

WILLIAM GODWIN : *Letter to an unknown correspondent*, in 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries,' by C. Kegan Paul, Boston : Roberts Bros., 1876.

Mrs. Godwin [formerly Mrs. Clairmont], was a harsh stepmother. . . She had strong views, in which many would agree, that each child should be educated to some definite duties, and with a view of filling some useful place in life ; but this arrangement soon had at least a show of partiality. It was found that Jane Clairmont's mission in life, according to her mother's view, was to have all the education and even accomplishments which their slender means would admit ; while household drudgery was from an early age discovered to be the life-work of Fanny and Mary Godwin. That Mary Shelley was afterward a worthy intellectual companion to Shelley, is in no degree due to Mrs. Godwin, and little to her father's direct teaching. All the education she had up to the time when she linked her fate with Shelley's, was self-gained ; the merits of such a work as 'Frankenstein' were her own ; the faults were those of her home-training.

C. KEGAN PAUL : 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries.'

*Fanny Godwin, as she was always called, at the age of twenty-two committed suicide by taking laudanum, doubtless impelled by the singular melancholy inherited from her mother,

When we reached Skinner Street, he [Shelley] said, "I must speak with Godwin; come in, I will not detain you long." I followed him through ^{Mary at} sixteen. the shops, which was the only entrance, and up stairs. We entered a room on the first floor; it was shaped like a quadrant. In the arc were windows; in one radius a fire-place, and in the other a door, and shelves with many old books. William Godwin was not at home. Byshe strode about the room, causing the crazy floor of the ill-built dwelling-house to shake and tremble under his impatient footsteps. . . I stood reading the names of old English authors on the backs of the venerable volumes, when the door was partially and softly opened. A thrilling voice called "Shelley!" A thrilling voice answered "Mary!" And he darted out of the room, like an arrow from the bow of the far-shooting king. A very young female, fair and fair-haired, pale indeed, and with a piercing look, wearing a frock of tartan, an unusual dress in London at that time, had called him out of the room. He was absent a very short time—a minute or two; and then returned. "Godwin is out; there is no use in waiting."

THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG: 'Life of Shelley,' 1858; quoted by R. H. Stoddard. 'Anecdote Biography of Shelley.' New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1877.

It was not until the summer of 1814 that Shelley and Mary Godwin became really acquainted, when he found the child whom he had scarcely noticed two years before, had grown into the woman of nearly

seventeen summers. . . Shelley came to London on May 18th, leaving his wife at Binfield, certainly without the least idea that it ^{Elopement} ~~with Shel-~~ ^{ley.} was to be a final separation from him, though the relations between husband and wife had for some time been increasingly unhappy. He was received in Godwin's house on the old footing of close intimacy, and rapidly fell in love with Mary. Fanny Godwin was away from home visiting some of the Wollstonecrafts, or she, three years older than Mary, might have discouraged the romantic attachment which sprang up between her sister and their friend. Jane Clairmont's influence was neither then, nor at any other time, used judiciously. It was easy for the lovers, for such they became before they were aware of it, to meet without the attention of the parents being drawn to the increasing intimacy, and yet without any such sense of clandestine interviews, as might have disclosed to themselves whither they were drifting. Mary was unhappy at home ; she thoroughly disliked Mrs. Godwin, to whom Fanny was far more tolerant ; her desire for knowledge and love of reading were discouraged, and when seen with a book in her hand, she was wont to hear from her stepmother that her proper sphere was the store-room. Old St. Pancras church-yard was then a quiet and secluded spot, where Mary Wollstonecraft's grave was shaded by a fine weeping-willow. Here Mary Godwin used to take her books in the warm days of June, to spend every hour she could call her own. Here her intimacy with Shelley ripened, and here, in Lady Shelley's words, "she placed her hand in his, and linked her fortunes with his own,"

On July 28th, early in the morning, Mary Godwin left her father's house, accompanied by Jane Clairmont. They joined Shelley, posted to Dover, and crossed in an open boat to Calais during a violent storm. . . . The three went to Paris, where they bought a donkey, and rode him in turns to Geneva, the others walking. Sleeping now in a cabaret and now in a cottage, they at last finished this strange honeymoon, and the strangest sentimental journey ever undertaken since Adam and Eve went forth with all the world before them where to choose.

C. KEGAN PAUL : 'William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries.'

The theories in which the daughter of the authors of 'Political Justice' and of the 'Rights of Woman' had been educated, spared her from any conflict between her duty and her affection. For she was the child of parents whose writings had had for their object to

No moral conflict. prove that marriage was one among the many institutions which a new era in the history of mankind was about to sweep away. By her father, whom she loved—by the writings of her mother, whom she had been taught to venerate—these doctrines had been rendered familiar to her mind. It was, therefore, natural that she should listen to the dictates of her own heart, and willingly unite her fate with one who was so worthy of her love.

LADY SHELLEY : 'Shelley Memorials, from Authentic Sources.' London : Henry S. King & Co., 1875.

It is remarkable that her youth was not the period of her greatest beauty, and certainly at that date

[1816-17] she did not do justice to herself either in her aspect or in the tone of her conversation. She was singularly pale. With a figure that ^{Mary at} needed to be set off, she was careless in ^{this period.} her dress; and the decision of purpose which ultimately gained her the title of 'Wilful Woman,' then appeared, at least in society, principally in the negative form—her temper being easily crossed, and her resentments^o taking a somewhat querulous and peevish tone.

THORNTON HUNT: 'Shelley,' in the *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1863.

I passed the summer of 1816 in the environs of Geneva. The season was cold and rainy, and in the evenings we crowded around a blazing wood fire, and occasionally amused ourselves with some German stories of ghosts, which happened to fall into our hands. These tales excited in us a playful desire of imitation. Two other friends and myself agreed to write each a story, founded ^{Origin of} on some supernatural occurrence. The ^{Frankenstein.} weather, however, suddenly became serene; and my two friends left me on a journey among the Alps, and lost, in the magnificent scenes which they present, all memory of their ghostly visions. [Frankenstein] is the only one which has been completed.

MARY SHELLEY: *First Preface* to 'Frankenstein.' Boston: Sever, Francis & Co., 1869.

I busied myself *to think of a story*—a story to rival those which had excited us to this task. . . . I

thought and pondered—vainly. I felt that blank
 Its concep- incapability of invention which is the
 tion. greatest misery of authorship, when dull
 nothing replies to our anxious invocations. *Have
 you thought of a story?* I was asked each morning,
 and each morning I was forced to reply with a mortifying negative.

Many and long were the conversations between Lord Byron and Shelley, to which I was a devout but nearly silent listener. During one of these, various philosophical doctrines were discussed, and among others, the nature of the principle of life, and whether there was any probability of its ever being discovered and communicated. . . . Night waned upon this talk, and even the witching hour had gone by, before we retired to rest. When I had placed my head on my pillow, I did not sleep, nor could I be said to think. My imagination, unbidden, possessed and guided me, gifting the successive images that arose in my mind with a vividness far beyond the usual bound of reverie. I saw—with shut eyes, but acute mental vision—I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. . . . I opened my eyes in terror. The idea so possessed my mind, that a thrill of fear ran through me and I wished to exchange the ghastly image of my fancy for the realities around. I see them still; the very room, the dark *parquet*, the closed shutters, with the moonlight struggling through, and the sense I had that the glassy lake and the high white Alps were beyond. I could not so easily get rid of my hideous phantom; still it haunted me. I must try to think of something else. I recurred to my ghost story—my

tiresome, unlucky ghost story. Swift as light, and as cheering, was the idea that broke in upon me. "I have found it!"

. . . On the morrow I announced that I had *thought of a story*. I began that day with the words, "*It was on a dreary night in November,*" making only a transcript of the grim terrors of my waking dream.

MARY SHELLEY : *Second Preface* to 'Frankenstein.'

The most striking feature in her face was her calm, gray eyes ; she was rather under the English standard of woman's height, very fair and light-haired, witty, social, and animated in the society of friends, though mournful in solitude ; like Shelley, though in a minor degree, she had the power of expressing her thoughts in varied and appropriate words, derived from familiarity with the works of our vigorous old writers.

E. J. TRELAUNY : 'Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron.' Boston : Ticknor & Fields, 1858.

It is clear that the society of Shelley was to her a great school, which she did not appreciate to the full until most calamitously it was taken away ; and yet, of course, she could not fail to learn the greater part of what it had become to her. This again showed itself even in her appearance, after she had spent some years in Italy ; for, while she had grown far more comely than she was in her mere youth, she had acquired a deeper insight into many subjects that interested Shelley, and some others ; and she had learned

to express the force of natural affection, which she was born to feel, but which had somehow been stunted and suppressed in her youth.

She was a woman of extraordinary power, of heart as well as head. Many circumstances conspired to conceal some of her natural faculties. . . . Her

Her peculiar powers. father—speaking with great diffidence, from a very slight and imperfect knowledge—appeared to me a harsh and ungenial man. She inherited from him her thin voice,* but not the steel-edged sharpness of his own; and she inherited, not from him, but from her mother, a largeness of heart that entered proportionately into the working of her mind. She had a masculine capacity for study; for, though I suspect her early schooling was irregular, she remained a student all her life, and by painstaking industry made herself acquainted with any subject that she had to handle.

THORNTON HUNT: 'Shelley.'

In looking over the journal in which, from day to day, Mrs. Shelley was in the habit of noting their occupations, as well as passing events, one is struck with wonder at the number of books which they read in the

Constant reading. course of the year. At home or travelling—before breakfast, or waiting for the mid-day meal—by the side of a stream, or on the ascent of a mountain—a book was never absent from the hands of one or the other: and there were never two books; one read while the other listened.

LADY SHELLEY: 'Shelley Memorials.'

*See Shelley's 'Epipsychidon.'

We suffered a severe affliction in Rome [in 1819] by the loss of our eldest child, who was of such beauty and promise as to cause him deservedly to be the idol of our hearts. We left the capital of the world, anxious for a time to escape a spot associated too intimately with his presence and loss.

Loss of
William
Shelley.

Some friends of ours were residing in the neighborhood of Leghorn, and we took a small house, Villa Valsovano, about half-way between the town and Monte Nero, where we remained during the summer. Our villa was situated in the midst of a podere; the peasants sang as they worked beneath our windows, during the heats of a very hot season, and in the evening the water-wheel creaked as the process of irrigation went on, and the fire-flies flashed from among the myrtle hedges:—nature was bright, sunshiny and cheerful, or diversified by storms of a majestic terror, such as we had never before witnessed. At the top of the house there was a sort of terrace . . . very small, yet not only roofed but glazed; this Shelley made his study; it looked out on a wide prospect of fertile country, and commanded a view of the near sea. . . . In the spring [of 1820, having passed the winter in Florence and Pisa] we spent a week or two near Leghorn, borrowing the house of some friends, who were absent on a journey to England. It was on a beautiful summer evening while wandering among the lanes, whose myrtle hedges were the bowers of the fire-flies, that we heard the carolling of the skylark, which inspired one of the most beautiful of his poems.

Italian life
of the Shel-
leys.

The bay of Spezia is of considerable extent, and divided by a rocky promontory into a larger and smaller one. The town of Lerici is situated on the eastern point, and in the depth of the smaller bay, which bears the name of this town, is the village of Sant' Arenzo. Our house, Casa Magni, ^{Shelley's last home near Sant' Arenzo, 1823} was close to this village; the sea came up to the door, a steep hill sheltered it behind. The proprietor . . . had rooted up the olives on the hillside, and planted forest trees; . . . some fine walnut and ilex trees intermingled their dark massy foliage, and formed groups which still haunt my memory, as then they satiated the eye with a sense of loveliness. The scene was indeed of unimaginable beauty; the blue extent of waters, the almost land-locked bay, the near castle of Lerici, shutting it in to the east, and distant Porto Venere to the west; the varied forms of the precipitous rocks that bound in the beach, over which there was only a winding rugged foot-path towards Lerici, and none on the other side; the tideless sea leaving no sands nor shingle—formed a picture such as one sees in Salvator Rosa's landscapes only: sometimes the sunshine vanished when the sirocco raged—the ponente, the wind was called on that shore. The gales and squalls, that hailed our first arrival, surrounded the bay with foam; the howling wind swept round our exposed house, and the sea roared unremittingly, so that we almost fancied ourselves on board ship. At other times sunshine and calm invested sea and sky, and the rich tints of Italian heaven bathed the scene. The natives were wilder than the place. . . . If ever fate whispered of coming disaster, such inaudible, but not unfelt, prog-

nostics hovered around us. The beauty of the place seemed unearthly in its excess : the distance we were at from all signs of civilization, the sea at our feet, its murmurs or its roarings forever in our ears—all these things led the mind to brood over strange thoughts, and, lifting it from every-day life, caused it to be familiar with the unreal. A sort of spell surrounded us, and each day, as the voyagers did not return, we grew restless and disquieted ; and yet, strange to say, we were not fearful of the most apparent danger.

The spell snapped, it was all over ; an interval of agonizing doubt was changed to the certainty of the death that eclipsed all happiness for the survivors forevermore.

MARY SHELLEY : *Notes*, in 'Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley.' Boston : Little, Brown, & Co., 1857.

She impressed me as a person with warm social feelings, dependent for happiness on loving encouragement, needing a guiding and sustaining hand.

In person she was of middle height and graceful figure. Her face, though not regularly beautiful, was comely and spiritual, of winning expression, and with a look of inborn refinement ; as well as culture. It had a touch of sadness when at rest.

ROBERT DALE OWEN : *Quoted in* 'Heroines of Free Thought,' S. A. Underhill. New York : Charles P. Somerby, 139 Eighth Street, 1876.

I have heard her accused of an over-anxiety to be admired ; and something of the sort was discernible

in society : it was a weakness as venial as it was purely superficial. Away from society she was as truthful and simple a woman as I have ever met—was as faithful a friend

**Develop-
ment of char-
acter.**

as the world has produced—using that unreserved directness toward those whom she regarded with affection, which is the very crowning glory of friendly intercourse. I suspect that these qualities came out in their greatest force after her calamity ; for many things which she said in her regret, and passages in Shelley's own poetry, make me doubt whether little habits of temper, and possibly of a refined and exacting coquettishness, had not prevented him from acquiring so full a knowledge of her as she had of him.

THORNTON HUNT : ' Shelley.'

Her well-shaped, golden-haired head, almost always a little bent and drooping ; her marble-white shoulders and arms statuesquely visible in the perfectly plain black velvet dress, which the cus-
Appearance. toms of that time allowed to be cut low, and which her own taste adopted (for she never wore the conventional "widow's weeds" and "widow's cap") ; her thoughtful, earnest eyes ; her short upper lip and intellectually curved mouth, with a certain close-compressed and decisive expression while she listened, and a relaxation into fuller redness and mobility while speaking ; her exquisitely formed, white, dimpled, small hands, with rosy palms, and plumply commencing fingers, that tapered into tips as slender and delicate as those in a Vandyck portrait—all remain palpably present to memory. Another peculiarity in Mrs. Shelley's hand

was its singular flexibility, which permitted her bending the fingers back so as almost to approach the portion of her arm above her wrist. She once did this smilingly and repeatedly, to amuse the girl who was noting its whiteness and pliancy, and who now, as an old woman, records its remarkable beauty.

Very sweet and very encouraging was Mary Shelley to her young namesake, Mary Victoria, making her proud and happy by giving her a presentation copy of her wonderful book, 'Frankenstein,' and pleasing her girlish fancy by the gift of a string of cut-coral graduated beads from Italy. . . .

Her mode of uttering the word "Lerici," dwells upon our memory with peculiarly subdued and lingering intonation, associated as it was with all that was most mournful in connection with that picturesque spot where she learned she had lost her "beloved Shelley" forever from this fair earth.

She was never tired of asking Francesco [Mr. Francis Novello] to sing Mozart's "Qui Sdegno," "Possenti Numi," "Mentre ti Lascio," "Tuba Mirum," "La Vendetta," "Non piu Andrai," or "Madamina;" so fond was she of his singing her favorite composer.

Love of
Music.

MARY (VICTORIA NOVELLO) COWDEN CLARKE: 'Recollections of Writers.' New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

If the reader desires a portrait of Mary, he has one in the well-known antique bust sometimes called "Isis," and sometimes "Clytie"; a woman's head and shoulders rising from a lotus-flower. **A portrait.**

It is most probably the portrait of a Roman lady: is

in some degree more elongated and "classic," than Mary; but, on the other hand, it falls short of her, for it gives no idea of her tall and intellectual forehead, nor has it any trace of the bright, animated, and sweet expression that so often lighted up her face.

THORNTON HUNT: 'Shelley.'

How changed is the taste of verse, prose, and painting, since *le bon vieux temps*, dear madam! Nothing attracts us but what terrifies, and is within—if within—a hair's breadth of positive disgust.

A criticism. Some of the strange things they write remind me of Squire Richard's visit to the Tower Menagerie, when he says: "Odd, they are *pure* grim devils,"—particularly a wild and hideous tale called 'Frankenstein.'

MRS. PIOZZI: *Letters to Mme. D'Arblay*, in the latter's 'Diary and Letters'; edited by Sarah Chauncey Woolsey. Boston: Roberts Bros., 1880.

The feeling with which we perused the unexpected and fearful, yet, allowing the possibility of the event, very natural conclusion of Frankenstein's experiment, shook a little even our firm nerves. . . . It is no slight merit in our eyes that the tale, though wild in incident, is written in plain and forcible English, without exhibiting that mixture of hyperbolical Germanisms with which tales of wonder are usually told. The ideas of the author are always clearly as well as forcibly expressed; and his* descriptions of landscape have in them the choice requisites of truth, fresh-

Scott's remarks.

*Shelley was at first supposed to be the author of 'Frankenstein.'

ness, precision, and beauty. The self-education of the monster, considering the slender opportunities of acquiring knowledge that he possessed, we have already noticed as improbable and over-strained.

SIR WALTER SCOTT : 'Remarks on Frankenstein,' *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, March, 1818. ('Scott's Miscellanies,' vol. i. Philadelphia : Carey & Hart, 1841.)

Mrs. Shelley's 'Frankenstein' . . . he [Charles Lamb] thought the most extraordinary realization of the idea of a being out of nature which had ever been effected.

Lamb's
praise.

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD : 'The Works of Charles Lamb, His Letters, and a Sketch of his Life.' New York: Harper & Bros., 1838.

We have spoken of Mrs. Shelley's similarity in genius to her husband's—we by no means think her his equal. She has not his subtlety, swiftness, wealth of imagination, and is never caught up (like Ezekiel by his lock of hair) into the same rushing whirlwind of inspiration. She has much, however, of his imaginative and of his speculative qualities—her tendency, like his, is to the romantic, the ethereal, and the terrible. The tie detaining her, as well as him to the earth, is slender—her protest against society is his, copied out in a female hand—her style is carefully and successfully modeled upon his—she bears in brief, to him, the resemblance which Laone did to Laon, which Astarte did to Manfred. . . . Perhaps, indeed, intercourse with a being so peculiar . . . has some-

Intellectual
resemblance
to Shelley.

what affected the originality, and narrowed the extent of her own genius.

Mrs. Shelley's genius, though true and powerful, is monotonous and circumscribed—more so than even her father's—and, in this point, presents a strong contrast to her husband's. She has no wit, nor humor—little dramatic talent. Strong, clear description of the gloomier scenes of nature, or the darker passions of the mind, or of those supernatural objects which her fancy, except in her first work, somewhat laboriously creates, is her forte. Hence her reputation still rests upon 'Frankenstein'; . . . she unquestionably made him, but he has had no progeny.

. . . She has succeeded in her delineation; she has painted this shapeless being upon the imagination of the world forever; and beside Caliban, and Hecate, and Death and Life, and all other weird and gloomy creations, this nameless, unfortunate, involuntary, gigantic unit stands.

. . . The work is wonderful as the work of a girl of eighteen. One distinct addition to our original creations must be conceded her—and it is no little praise.

GEORGE GILFILLAN : 'A Second Gallery of Literary Portraits.' Edinburgh : James Hogg. London : R. Groombridge & Sons, 1850.

MARY LAMB.

(1764—1847.)

MARY LAMB.

Seldom is the name of Mary Lamb seen without that of her brother. "The Lambs" still walk hand-in-hand in our mention, as they were wont to walk on pleasant holidays to Enfield, and Potter's Bar, and Waltham; when Mary "used to deposit in the little hand-basket the day's fare of savory cold meat and salad," and Charles "to pry about at noon-tide for some decent house where they might go in and produce their store, only paying for the ale that he must call for." Still they pass linked together through our thoughts, as on that sadder day when Charles Lloyd met them, crossing the fields to Hoxton—hand-in-hand, and weeping.

It is an act of severance against which the conscience somewhat protests, to present Mary alone to the consideration of the reader. It is like removing her from the protection of his presence who stood so faithfully and long between her and the world.

Mary Lamb was born in Crown Office Row, Inner Temple, December 3d, 1764. She was the daughter of John Lamb, the "clerk, good servant, dresser, friend, flapper, guide, stop-watch, auditor, treasurer," as his son describes him, of a barrister named Salt. Charles was eleven years Mary's junior. In 1795, (the

elder Lamb, whose faculties were failing, having been pensioned by Mr. Salt,) the family left the Temple for lodgings in Little Queen Street. Here occurred, on the 21st of September in that year, the tragedy which set its stamp upon the after-life of Mary and Charles, and of which there is a sufficient account among the following extracts.

Mary remained in the asylum at Islington until the spring of 1797, when Charles, having satisfied the authorities by a solemn engagement to care for her during life, took a room for her at Hackney, where he spent his Sundays and holidays. In April, 1799, old John Lamb died, and from that time until death separated them Mary shared her brother's home—or homes, for indeed they were legion. Procter chronicles the Lambs as lodging, in 1800, in Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane; and removing during the same year to Mitre Court Buildings, Temple, where they remained till 1809. No. 4, Inner Temple Lane was their next residence, which they left, in 1817, for Russell Street, Covent Garden. In 1823 they removed to Colebrook Row, Islington; and in 1826 to Enfield. In 1830 they returned to Southampton Buildings. In 1833, Charles, having determined that his sister should remain with him during her illness for the future, they went to live at Mrs. Walden's, in Church Street, Edmonton; where, on December 27th, 1834, Charles Lamb died.

Mary survived her brother more than twelve years. Age, and the decay of her mind, mitigated her grief for him. On the 28th of May, 1847, she was laid in his grave.

The works of Mary Lamb are as follows :

Tales from Shakespeare, published in 1807 ; in this work, the six great tragedies are by Charles.

Mrs. Leicester's School, published in 1808, to which Charles contributed three of the ten stories.

Poetry for Children, 1809 ; here Charles was again her co-laborer, performing one-third of the work, but it is not positively certain which of the poems are his.

On the south side of Fleet Street, near to where it adjoins Temple Bar, lies the Inner Temple. It extends southward to the Thames, and contains long ranges of melancholy ^{Mary's} birthplace. buildings, in which lawyers and their followers congregate. It is a district very memorable. About seven hundred years ago it was the abiding-place of the Knights Templars, who erected there a church, which still uplifts its round tower (its sole relic) for the wonder of modern times. Fifty years since, I remember, you entered the precinct through a lowering archway that opened into a gloomy passage—Inner Temple Lane. On the east side rose the church ; and on the west was a dark line of chambers, since pulled down and rebuilt, and now called Johnson's Buildings. At some distance westward was an open court, in which was a sun-dial, and, in the midst, a solitary fountain, that sent its silvery voice into the air above, the murmur of which, descending, seemed to render the place more lonely. Midway, between the Inner Temple Lane and the Thames, was a range of substantial chambers (overlooking the

gardens and the busy river), called Crown Office Row.

BRYAN W. PROCTER: 'Charles Lamb, a Memoir.' London: Edward Moxon & Co., 1866.

Her education in youth was not much attended to ;
 and she happily missed all that train of
Education. female garniture, which passeth by the
 name of accomplishments. She was tumbled early,
 by accident or design, into a spacious closet of
 good old English reading [the library of Mr.
 Salt, a barrister, to whom her father long acted
 as clerk] without much selection or prohibition,
 and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome
 pasturage. Had I twenty girls, they should be
 brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not
 whether their chance in wedlock might not be dimin-
 ished by it, but I can answer for it, that it makes (if
 the worst comes to the worst) most incomparable old
 maids.

CHARLES LAMB: *Mackery End, in Hertfordshire*,
 'Essays of Elia.' ('Works, with a Sketch of his Life,'
 by Thomas Noon Talfourd. New York: Harper
 & Brothers, 1838.)

A little selection would have made the pasturage all
 the wholesomer to a child of Mary's sensitive, brood-
 ing nature ; for the witch stories and the
Effect of this cruel tales of the sufferings of the martyrs
reading. on which she pored all alone, as her brother did after
 her, wrought upon her tender brain and lent their
 baleful aid to nourish those seeds of madness which
 she inherited.

The London-born and bred child had occasional

tastes of joyous, healthful life in the country, for her mother had hospitable relatives in her native county, pleasant Hertfordshire. In after life she embodied them, mingling fiction with fact, ^{Country pleasures.} in a story called 'Louisa Manners; or, the Farm-house,' where she tells in sweet and child-like words of the ecstasy of a little four-year-old girl on finding herself for the first time in the midst of fields quite full of bright, shining yellow flowers, with sheep and young lambs feeding; of the inexhaustible interest of the farm-yard, the thresher in the barn with his terrifying flail and black beard, the collection of eggs and searching for scarce violets ("if we could find eggs and violets too, what happy children we were"); of the hay-making and the sheep-shearing, the great wood-fires and the farm-house suppers.

With the cruelty of ignorance Mary's mother and grandmother [Mrs. Field], suffered her young spirit to do battle, in silent and inward solitariness, with the phantoms imagination conjured up in her too sensitive brain. "Polly, what are those poor, crazy, moythered brains of yours thinking always?" was worthy Mrs. Field's way of endeavoring to win the confidence of the thoughtful, suffering child. It was simple stupidity, lack of insight or sym- ^{Lack of sympathy in her home.} pathy in the elders; and was repaid by the sweetest affection, and, in after-years, by a self-sacrificing devotion which, carried at last far beyond her strength, led to the great calamity of her life.

On the 10th of February, 1775, arrived a new member into the household group—Charles, the ^{Charles.} child of his father's old age, the "weakly but very pretty babe" who was to prove their

strong support. And now Mary was no longer a lonely girl. She was just old enough to be trusted to nurse and tend the baby, and she became a mother to it. In after-life she spoke of the comfort, the wholesome curative influence upon her young troubled mind, which this devotion to Charles in infancy brought with it. As his young mind unfolded, he found in her intelligence and love the same genial, fostering influences that had cherished his feeble frame into health and strength. It was with his little hand in hers that he first trod the Temple Gardens, and spelled out the inscriptions on the sun-dials and on the tombstones in the burying-ground, and wondered, finding only lists of the virtues, "where the naughty people were buried?" Like Mary, his disposition was so different from that of his gay, pleasure-loving parents that they but ill understood "and gave themselves little trouble about him," which also tended to draw brother and sister closer together.

In the Lamb household the domestic outlook grew dark as soon as Mary was grown up, for her father's faculties and her mother's health failed early; and when, in his fifteenth year, Charles left Christ's Hospital, it was already needful for him to take up the burthens of a man on his young shoulders; and for Mary not only to make head against sickness, helplessness, old age, with its attendant exigencies, but to add to the now straitened means by taking in millinery work. For eleven years, as she has told us [in an essay on needle-work, contributed to the *British Lady's Magazine*, April, 1815], she maintained herself

Mary's
young
womanhood.

by the needle ; from the age of twenty-one to thirty-two, that is.

The year 1795 witnessed changes for all. The father, now wholly in his dotage; was pensioned off by Mr. Salt, and the family had to exchange their old home in the Temple for strait-^{The great} tragedy. ened lodgings in Little Queen Street, Holborn (the site of which and of the adjoining houses is now occupied by Trinity Church). Meanwhile, Lamb was first tasting the joys and sorrows of love. Alice W— lingers but as a shadow in the records of his life; the passion, however, was real enough and took deep hold of him, conspiring with the cares and trials of home-life to give a fatal stimulus to the germs of brain-disease, which were part of the family heritage, and for six weeks he was in a mad-house. . . . No sooner was Charles restored to himself than the elder brother, John, met with a serious accident ; and though while in health he had carried himself to more comfortable quarters, he did not now fail to return and be nursed with anxious solicitude by his brother and sister. This was the last ounce. Mary, worn out with years of nightly as well as daily attendance upon her mother, who was now wholly deprived of the use of her limbs, and harassed by a close application to needle-work, to help her in which she had been obliged to take a young apprentice, was at last strained beyond the utmost pitch of physical endurance, “worn down to a state of extreme nervous misery.” About the middle of September, she being then thirty-two years old, her family observed some symptoms of insanity in her. . . . On the afternoon

of the 21st, seized with a sudden attack of frenzy, she snatched a knife from the table and pursued the young apprentice round the room, when her mother, interposing, received a fatal stab and died instantly. Mary was totally unconscious of what she had done.

ANNE GILCHRIST : 'Mary Lamb.' (Famous Women Series.) Boston : Roberts Bros., 1883.

My poor, dear, dearest sister, the unhappy and unconscious instrument of the Almighty's judgment on our house, is restored to her senses ; to a dreadful sense and recollection of what has passed, awful to her mind, and impressive (as it must be ^{Mary on} her recovery. to the end of life), but tempered with religious resignation and the reasonings of a sound judgment, which in this early stage knows how to distinguish between a deed committed in a transient fit of frenzy and the terrible guilt of a mother's murder. I have seen her. I found her this morning, calm and serene ; far, very far, from an indecent, forgetful serenity.

CHARLES LAMB : *Letter to Coleridge*, 1796, in 'Final Memorials of Charles Lamb,' by Thomas Noon Talfour. London : Edward Moxon, 1848.

Little could any one, observing Miss Lamb in the habitual serenity of her demeanor, guess the calamity in which she had partaken or the malady which frightfully checkered her life. From Mr. Lloyd . . . I learned that she had described herself, on her recovery from the fatal attack, as having experienced, while it was subsiding, such a conviction that she was absolved in Heaven from all taint of the deed

in which she had been the agent—such an assurance that it was a dispensation of Providence—such a sense that her mother knew her entire innocence and shed down blessings upon her, as though she had seen the reconcilment in solemn vision—that she was not sorely afflicted by the recollection. It was as if the old Greek notion of the necessity for the unconscious shedder of blood, else polluted though guiltless, to pass through a religious purification, had in her case been happily accomplished.

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD : ‘Final Memorials of Charles Lamb.’

Her relapses were not dependent on the seasons ; they came in hot summers and with the freezing winters. The only remedy seems to have been extreme quiet when any slight symptom of uneasiness was apparent. Charles (poor **Relapses.** fellow) had to live, day and night, in the society of a person who was—mad ! If any exciting talk occurred, he had to dismiss his friend with a whisper. If any stupor or extraordinary silence was observed, then he had to rouse her instantly.

BRYAN W. PROCTER : ‘Charles Lamb ; a Memoir.’

The constant impendency of this giant sorrow saddened to the Lambs even their holidays ; as the journey which they both regarded as the relief and charm of the year was frequently followed by a seizure.

. . . Miss Lamb experienced, and full well understood, premonitory symptoms of the attack, in restlessness, low fever, and the inability to sleep ; and, as gently as possible, prepared her brother for

the duty he must soon perform ; and thus, unless he could stave off the terrible separation till Sunday, obliged him to ask leave of absence from the office as if for a day's pleasure—a bitter mockery ! On one occasion Mr. Charles Lloyd met them, slowly pacing together a little footpath in Hoxton Fields, both weeping bitterly, and found, on joining them, that they were taking their solemn way to the accustomed asylum.

Miss Lamb would have been remarkable for the sweetness of her disposition, the clearness of her understanding, and the gentle wisdom of all her acts and words, even if these qualities had not been presented in marvellous contrast with the distractions under which she suffered for weeks, latterly for months in every year. There was no tinge of insanity discernible in her manner to the most observant eye. . . . Hazlitt used to say that he never met with a woman who could reason and had met with only one thoroughly reasonable—the sole exception being Mary Lamb. She did not wish, however, to be made an exception, to the general disparagement of her sex ; for in all her thoughts and feelings she was most womanly—keeping under, ever in due subordination to her notion of a woman's province, an intellect of rare excellence which flashed out when the restraints of gentle habit and humble manner were withdrawn by the terrible force of disease. Though her conversation in sanity was never marked by smartness or repartee, seldom rising beyond that of a sensible, quiet gentlewoman, appreciating and enjoying the talents of her friends, it was otherwise in her madness. Her ramblings often sparkled with brilliant description and

shattered beauty. She would fancy herself in the days of Queen Anne or George the First ; and describe the brocaded dames and courtly manners as though she had been bred among them, in the best style of the old comedy. It was all broken and disjointed, so that the hearer could remember little of her discourse ; but the fragments were like the jewelled speeches of Congreve, only shaken from their settings. There was sometimes even a vein of crazy logic running through them, associating things essentially most dissimilar, but connecting them by a verbal association in strange order. As a mere physical instance of deranged intellect, her condition was, I believe, extraordinary ; it was as if the finest elements of the mind had been shaken into fantastic combinations, like those of a kaleidoscope.

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD : 'Final Memorials of Charles Lamb.'

It was always in a room of moderate size, comfortably but plainly furnished, that he [Charles] lived. An old mahogany table was opened out in ^{Home of} the middle of the room, round which, ^{the Lambs.} and near the walls, were old, high-backed chairs (such as our grandfathers used), and a long, plain book-case completely filled with old books. These were his "ragged veterans." In one of his letters he says : "My rooms are luxurious : one for prints, one for books ; a summer and winter parlor." They, however, were not otherwise decorated. I do not remember ever to have seen a flower or an image in them. He had not been educated into expensive tastes. His extravagances were confined to books.

These were all chosen by himself, all old, and all in "admired disorder"; yet he could lay his hand on any volume in a moment. . . . Here Charles Lamb sat, when at home, always near the table. At the opposite side was his sister, engaged in some domestic work, knitting or sewing, or poring over a modern novel. She wore a neat cap, of the fashion of her youth; an old-fashioned dress. Her face was pale and somewhat square, but very placid, with gray, intelligent eyes. She was very mild in her manner to strangers, and to her brother gentle and tender, always. She had often an upward look of peculiar meaning, when directed toward him, as though to give him assurance that all was then well with her. His affection for her was somewhat less on the surface, but always present. There was great gratitude intermingled with it. "In the days of weakling infancy," he writes: "I was her tender charge, as I have been her care in foolish manhood since." Then he adds, pathetically, "I wish I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division."

BRYAN W. PROCTER: 'Charles Lamb; a Memoir.'

Her manner was easy, almost homely, so quiet, unaffected, and perfectly unpretending was **Mary's manner.** it. Beneath the sparing talk and retired carriage, few casual observers would have suspected the ample information and large intelligence that lay comprised there. She was oftener a listener than a speaker. In the modest-behaved woman simply sitting there, taking small

share in general conversation, few who did not know her would have imagined the accomplished classical scholar, the excellent understanding, the altogether rarely-gifted being, morally and mentally, that Mary Lamb was.

CHARLES AND MARY COWDEN CLARKE: 'Recollections of Writers.' New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

His sister, whose literary reputation is closely associated with her brother's, and who, as the original of "Bridget Elia," is a kind of object for literary affection, came in after him. She is a small, bent figure, evidently a victim to illness, **Appearance.** and hears with difficulty. Her face has been, I should think, a fine and handsome one, and her bright, gray eye is still full of intelligence and fire.

N. P. WILLIS: 'Pencillings by the Way.' New York: Charles Scribner, 1853.

In stature Mary was under the middle-size, and her bodily frame was strong. She could walk fifteen miles with ease; her brother speaks of their having walked thirty miles together, and, even at sixty years of age, she was capable of twelve miles "most days."

ANNE GILCHRIST: 'Mary Lamb.'

Miss Lamb bore a strong personal resemblance to her brother; being in stature under middle height, possessing well-cut features and a countenance of singular sweetness, with intelligence. Her brown eyes were soft, yet penetrating; her nose and mouth very shapely; while the general expression was mildness

itself. Her apparel was always of the plainest kind, a black stuff or silk gown, made and worn in the simplest fashion. She took snuff liberally—a habit

Habits. that had evidently grown out of her propensity to sympathize with and share all her brother's tastes, and it certainly had the effect of enhancing her likeness to him. She had a small, white, and delicately-formed hand, and as it hovered above the tortoise-shell box containing the powder so strongly approved by them both, in search of the stimulating pinch, the act seemed yet another link of association between the brother and sister, when hanging together over their favorite books and studies.

CHARLES AND MARY COWDEN CLARKE: 'Recollections of Writers.'

Bridget Elia has been my housekeeper for many a long year. I have obligations to Bridget extending beyond the period of memory. We house together, old bachelor and old maid, in a sort of

Lamb's sketch of his sister. double singleness. . . . We agree pretty well in our tastes and habits—yet so, as “with a difference.” We are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings, as it should be among near relations. Our sympathies are rather understood than expressed, and once, upon my dissembling a tone in my voice more kind than ordinary, my cousin burst into tears, and complained that I was altered. We are both great readers in different directions. While I am hanging over (for the thousandth time) some passage in old Burton, or one of his strange contemporaries, she is abstracted

in some modern tale or adventure, whereof our common reading-table is daily fed with assiduously fresh supplies. Narrative teases me. I have little concern in the progress of events. She must have a story—well, ill, or indifferently told—so there be life stirring in it, and plenty of good or evil accidents. The fluctuations of fortune in fiction—and almost in real life—have ceased to interest, or operate but dully upon me. Out-of-the-way humors and opinions—heads with some diverting twist in them—the oddities of authorship please me most. My cousin has a native disrelish of any thing that sounds odd or bizarre. Nothing goes down with her that is quaint, irregular, or out of the road of common sympathy. She “holds nature more clever.”

It has been the lot of my cousin, oftener perhaps than I could have wished, to have had for her associates and mine freethinkers—leaders and disciples of novel philosophies and systems; but she neither wrangles with, nor accepts their opinions. That which was good and venerable to her when a child, retains its authority over her mind still. She never juggles or plays tricks with her understanding.

We are both of us inclined to be a little too positive, and I have observed the result of our disputes to be almost uniformly this: that in matters of fact, dates, and circumstances, it turns out that I was in the right, and my cousin in the wrong. But where we have differed upon moral points, upon something proper to be done, or let alone; whatever heat of opposition or steadiness of conviction I set out with, I am sure always, in the long run, to be brought over to her way of thinking.

I must touch upon the foibles of my kinswoman with a gentle hand, for Bridget does not like to be told of her faults. She hath an awkward trick (to say no worse of it) of reading in company ; at which times she will answer Yes or No to a question without fully understanding its purport—which is provoking and derogatory in the highest degree to the dignity of the putter of the said question. Her presence of mind is equal to the most pressing trials of life, but will sometimes desert her upon trifling occasions. When the purpose requires it, and is a thing of moment, she can speak to it greatly ; but in matters which are not stuff of the conscience, she hath been known sometimes to let slip a word less seasonable.

In a season of distress she is the truest comforter ; but in the teasing accidents and minor perplexities which do not call out the *will* to meet them, she sometimes maketh matters worse by an excess of participation. If she does not always divide your trouble, upon the pleasanter occasions of life, she is sure always to treble your satisfaction.

CHARLES LAMB : *Mackery End, in Hertfordshire*, 'Essays of Elia.'

When I first opened upon the just-mentioned poem ['The Force of Prayer, or the Founding of Bolton Priory,'] in a careless tone, I said to Mary, as ^{Mary's first} if putting a riddle, "What is good for a ^{pun.} bootless bene ?" To which, with infinite presence of mind (as the jest-book has it), she answered, "A shoeless pea." It was the first she ever made.

CHARLES LAMB : *Letter to Wordsworth*, in 'Final Memorials,' by T. N. Talfourd.

She had a speaking voice, gentle and persuasive ; and her smile was her brother's own—winning in the extreme. There was a certain catch, or emotional breathingness, in her utter-^{Her manner of speak-}ance, which gave an inexpressible charm ing. to her reading of poetry, and which lent a captivating earnestness to her mode of speech when addressing those she liked. This slight check, with its yearning, eager effect in her voice, had something softenedly akin to her brother Charles' impediment of articulation : in him it scarcely amounted to a stammer, in her it merely imparted additional stress to the fine-sensed suggestions she made to those whom she counselled or consoled. There was a certain old-world fashion in Mary Lamb's diction which gave it a most natural and quaintly pleasant effect, and which heightened rather than detracted from the more heart-felt or important things she uttered.

CHARLES AND MARY COWDEN CLARKE : 'Recollections of Writers.'

You would like to see us as we often sit writing on one table (but not on one cushion sitting), like *Hermia* and *Helena* in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' ; or rather, like an old literary ^{Writing together.} Darby and Joan, I, taking snuff, and he, groaning all the while and saying he can make nothing of it, which he always says till he has finished, and then he finds out that he has made something of it.

MARY LAMB : *Letter to Sarah Stoddart*, June 2nd, 1806, in 'Mary and Charles Lamb : Poems, Letters and Remains,' edited by W. Carew Hazlitt. New York : Scribner, Welford & Armstrong, 1874.

Mary is just stuck fast in 'All's Well that Ends Well.' She complains of having to set forth so many female characters in boys' clothes. She begins to think Shakespeare must have wanted——Imagination. I, to encourage her, for she often faints in the prosecution of her great work, flatter her with telling her how well such a play and such a play is done. But she is stuck fast.

CHARLES LAMB: *Letter to Wordsworth*, in 'Final Memorials,' by T. N. Talfourd.

I am in good spirits just at this present time, for Charles has been reading over the *tale* I told you plagued me so much, and he thinks it one of the very best: it is 'All's Well that Ends Well.' You must not mind the many wretchedly dull letters I have sent you: for, indeed, I cannot help it, my mind is so *dry* always after poring over my work all day. But it will soon be over.

I am cooking a shoulder of lamb (Hazlitt dines with us); it will be ready at two o'clock, if you can pop in and eat a bit with us.

MARY LAMB: *Letter to Sarah Stoddart*, July, 1806, in 'Mary and Charles Lamb,' by W. Carew Hazlitt.

It is not generally known, perhaps, that previously to their circulation in a collective shape, 'Tales from Shakespeare,' Godwin, the publisher and proprietor of the copyright, offered them to his juvenile patrons and patronesses at No. 41 Skinner Street, in six-penny books, with the plates (by Blake) "beautifully colored."

W. CAREW HAZLITT: 'Mary and Charles Lamb.'

It is now several days since I read the book you recommended to me, 'Mrs. Leicester's School'; and I feel as if I owed a debt in deferring to thank you for many hours of exquisite delight. Never have I read any thing in prose so many ^{Praise from Landor.} times over, within so short a space of time, as 'The Father's Wedding-day.' Most people, I understand, prefer the first tale—in truth a very admirable one—but others could have written it. Show me the man or woman, modern or ancient, who could have written this one sentence: "When I was dressed in my new frock, I wished poor mamma was alive to see how fine I was on papa's wedding-day; and I ran to my favorite station at her bedroom door." How natural, in a little girl, is this incongruity, this impossibility! . . . A fresh source of the pathetic bursts out before us, and not a bitter one. . . . The story is admirable throughout—incomparable, inimitable.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR: *Letter to H. C. Robinson*, April, 1831, in the latter's 'Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence.' Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co., 1871.

The first edition sold out immediately, and four more were called for in the course of five years. It has continued in fair demand ever since, though there have not been any thing like ^{'Mrs. Leicester's School.'} so many recent reprints as of the 'Tales from Shakespeare.' It is one of those children's books, which to re-open, in after-life is like revisiting some sunny old garden, some favorite haunt of childhood, where every nook and cranny seems

familiar and calls up a thousand pleasant memories.

ANNE GILCHRIST : ' Mary Lamb.'

I shall have to send you, in a week or two, two volumes of juvenile poetry done by Mary and me within the last six months. . . . Our little poems 'Poetry for Children,' are but humble, they have no name.

You must read them, remembering they were task-work ; and perhaps you will admire the number of subjects, all of children, picked out by an old bachelor and an old maid. Many parents would not have found so many.

CHARLES LAMB : *Letter to Coleridge*, June, 1809, in 'Final Memorials,' by T. N. Talfourd.

'Poetry for Children, Entirely Original, by the Author of Mrs. Leicester's School,' as the title-page runs, was published in the summer of 1809, and the whole of the first edition sold off rapidly ; but instead of being reprinted entire, selections from it only—twenty-six out of the eighty-four pieces—were incorporated, by a school-master of the name of Mylius, in two books called 'The First Book of Poetry' and 'The Poetical Class Book,' issued from the same Juvenile Library [Gódwin's] in 1810. These went through many editions, but ultimately dropped quite out of sight, as the original work had already done. Writing to Bernard Barton, in 1827, Lamb says :

"One likes to have one copy of every thing one does. I neglected to keep one of 'Poetry for Children,' the joint production of Mary and me, and it is not to be had for love or money." Fifty years later such

specimens of these poems as could be gathered from the Mylius' collections and from Lamb's own works were republished by Mr. W. Carew Hazlitt, and also by Richard Herne Shepherd, when at last, in 1877, there came to hand from Australia, a copy of the original edition ; it had been purchased at a sale of books and furniture at Plymouth, in 1866, and thence carried to Adelaide. It was reprinted entire by Mr. Shepherd (Chatto & Windus, 1878).

ANNE GILCHRIST : ' Mary Lamb.'

I called on Miss Lamb, and chatted with her. She had undergone great fatigue from writing an article about needle-work, for the new *Ladies' British Magazine*. She spoke of writing ^{Writing} as a most painful occupation which only ^{painful to} necessity could make her attempt. She has been learning Latin merely to assist her in acquiring a correct style. Yet, while she speaks of inability to write, what grace and talent has she not manifested in 'Mrs. Leicester's School,' etc.

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON : ' Diary,' Dec., 1814.

Once, when some visitors chanced to drop in unexpectedly upon her and her brother, just as they were going to sit down to their plain dinner of a bit of roast mutton, with her usual frank ^{True hospi-} hospitality, she pressed them to stay and ^{tality.} partake, cutting up the small joint into five equal portions, and saying in her simple, easy way, so truly her own, "There's a chop apiece for us, and we can make up with bread and cheese if we want more." With such a woman to carve for you and eat with

you, neck of mutton was better than venison, while bread and cheese more than replaced various courses of richest or daintiest dishes.

CHARLES AND MARY COWDEN CLARKE : ' Recollections of Writers.'

Let it be any autumn or winter month, when the fire is blazing steadily, and the clean-swept hearth and whist-tables speak of the spirit of Mrs. Battle. . . . The furniture is old-fashioned and worn ; the ceiling low, and not wholly unstained by traces of " the great plant " ; but the Hogarths, in narrow black frames, abounding in infinite thought, humor, and pathos, enrich the walls ; and all things wear an air of comfort and hearty English welcome. Lamb himself, yet unrelaxed by the glass, is sitting with a sort of Quaker primness at the whist-table, the gentleness of his melancholy smile half lost in his intentness on the game ; his partner, the author of ' Political Justice,' is regarding his hand with a philosophic but not a careless eye ; Captain Burney, only not venerable because so young in spirit, sits between them ; and H. C. R., who alone now and then breaks the proper silence to welcome some in-coming guest, is his happy partner—true winner in the game of life, whose leisure, achieved early, is devoted to his friends ! . . . In one corner of the room, you may see the pale, earnest countenance of Charles Lloyd, who is discouraging " of fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute," with Leigh Hunt. . . . Soon the room fills ; in slouches Hazlitt from the theatre, where his stubborn anger for Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo has been softened by Miss Stephens' angelic notes. . . . Now and then an actor glances in on us

**"The Lambs
at home."**

from "the rich Cathay" of the world behind the scenes. . . . Meanwhile, Becky lays the cloth on the side-table, under the direction of the most quiet, sensible, and kind of women—who soon compels the younger and more hungry of the guests to partake largely of the cold roast lamb, or boiled beef, the heaps of smoking roasted potatoes, and the vast jug of porter. Perfect freedom prevails. As the hot water and its accompaniments appear, and the severities of whist relax, the light of conversation thickens: Hazlitt, catching the influence of the spirit from which he has lately begun to abstain, utters some fine criticism with struggling emphasis; Lamb stammers out puns suggestive of wisdom; the various dribblets of talk combine into a stream, while Miss Lamb moves gently about to see that each modest stranger is duly served; turning, now and then, an anxious loving eye on Charles, which is softened into a half-humorous expression of resignation to inevitable fate, as he mixes his second tumbler!

TALFOURD: 'Final Recollections.'

She had a way of repeating her brother's words assentingly when he spoke to her. He once said (with his peculiar mode of tenderness, "*I must die first.*" beneath blunt, abrupt speech), "You must die first, Mary." She nodded with her little, quiet nod and sweet smile, "Yes, I must die first, Charles."

CHARLES AND MARY COWDEN CLARKE: 'Recollections of Writers.'

I resolved to-day to discharge a melancholy duty, and went down by the Edmonton stage to call on poor

Miss Lamb. It was a melancholy sight ; but more so to the reflection than to the sense. A stranger would have seen little remarkable about her. She was neither violent nor unhappy ; nor was she entirely without sense. She was, however, out of her mind, as the expression is ; but she could combine ideas, although imperfectly. . . . She gave me ^{A melan-} ~~choly~~ ^{visit.} her hand with great cordiality, and said : “ Now this is very kind—not merely good-natured, but very, very kind, to come and see me in my affliction.” It would be useless to attempt to remember all she said ; but it is to be remarked that her mind seemed turned to subjects connected with insanity as well as with her brother’s death. She is nine years and nine months older than he, and will soon be seventy. I have no doubt that if ever she be sensible of her brother’s loss it will upset her again. She will live forever in the memory of her friends as one of the most amiable and admirable of women.

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON : ‘ Diary,’ January, 1835.

I went down to Edmonton, and found dear Mary Lamb in very good health. She has now been so long well that one may hope for a continuance. I took a walk with her, and she led me to Charles Lamb’s grave.

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON : ‘ Diary,’ 1837.

He was there, asleep in the old churchyard, beneath the turf near which they had stood together, and had selected for a resting-place ; to this spot she used, when well, to stroll out mournfully in the evening, and

to this spot she would contrive to lead any friend who came in the summer evenings to drink tea and went out with her afterwards for a walk. At length, as her illness became more frequent, and her frame much weaker, she was induced to take up her abode under genial care, at a pleasant house in St. John's Wood, where she was surrounded by the old books and prints, and was frequently visited by her reduced number of surviving friends.

Mary at Ed-
monton after
the death of
Charles.

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD : 'Final Memorials of Charles Lamb.'

It is well known that Miss Lamb survived her brother many years. I remember that when she visited my father's house at Brompton, about 1843, she was accompanied by three or four snuff-boxes, which came empty and went away full; and by at least four large silk pocket-handkerchiefs, one of which was devoted to the reception of some article from the dinner-table, which happened to strike her fancy, and which she conveyed back with much satisfaction to St.

Eccentrici-
ties of her
last days.

John's Wood. . . . I met her also at Sir John Stoddart's, in the immediate neighborhood of our house at Brompton, and the same thing took place. It was the poor old lady's whim, and of course she was humored in it by every one. Sir John had to send out to the nearest tobacconist's, and get all the boxes filled; and a leg of a fowl, or some other dainty morsel which had been selected, was duly wrapped up in a bandana.

W. CAREW HAZLITT : 'Mary and Charles Lamb.'

Mary Lamb departed, eighty-two years old, on the 20th of May. She had survived her mind in great measure, but much of the *heart* remained. **Her death.** Miss Lamb had a very fine feeling for literature, and was refined in mind, though homely, almost coarse, in personal habits. Her departure is an escape out of prison, to her sweet, good soul.

SARA COLERIDGE : *Letter to Miss Fenwick*, 1847, in the former's 'Memoir and Letters,' edited by her daughter. New York : Harper & Bros., 1874.

Repeated attacks of her malady weakened her mind, but she retained to the last her sweetness of disposition unimpaired, and gently sank into death on the 20th of May, 1847.

A few survivors of the old circle, now sadly thinned, attended her remains to the spot in Edmonton churchyard, where they were laid above those of her brother. . . . In accordance with Lamb's own feeling, so far as it could be gathered from his expressions on a subject to which he did not often or willingly refer, he had been interred in a deep grave, simply dug, and wattled round, but without any affectation of stone or brickwork to keep the human dust from its kindred earth. So dry, however, is the soil of the quiet churchyard that the excavated earth left perfect walls of stiff clay, and permitted us just to catch a glimpse of the still untarnished edges of the coffin in which all the mortal part of one of the most delightful persons who ever lived was contained, and on which the remains of her he had loved were henceforth to rest. We felt, I believe, after a moment's strange shudder-

ing, that the reunion was well accomplished ; and although the true-hearted son of Admiral Burney, who had known and loved the pair we quitted from a child, refused to be comforted—even he will now join the scanty remnant of their friends in the softened remembrance that “ they were lovely in their lives,” and own with them the consolation of adding, at last, that “ in death they are not divided.”

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD : ‘ Final Memorials of Charles Lamb.’

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

1767—1849.

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

Maria Edgeworth—tiny and witty as Shakespeare's Maria—was born on the 1st of January, 1767, at the home of her mother's parents, Black Bourton, "between the towns of Farringdon, Berks, and Burford, Oxon." She was the daughter of Richard Lovell Edgeworth and Anna Maria Elers ; her father came of an English family which had settled in Ireland in Queen Elizabeth's time. Her mother died in 1773, when Maria was but six years old ; and in the same year Richard Edgeworth married Honora Sneyd. Maria had passed her early years partly at Black Bourton and partly at Hare Hatch, between Reading and Maidenhead, Berkshire, where her parents lived. On Mr. Edgeworth's second marriage she accompanied him and his wife to Edgeworthstown, the Irish estate which had fallen to him on the death of his father a few years before. In 1775 Maria was sent to the boarding-school of a Mrs. Latiffiere, at Derby. In 1780 Mrs. Honora Edgeworth, the beautiful stepmother to whom the affectionate child was much attached, died of consumption. About this time Maria was taken from the Derby school and sent to finish her education in London. Less than eight months after the death of his

second wife, the elastic-spirited Mr. Edgeworth married her sister Elizabeth.

In 1781 Maria was threatened with the loss of her eyesight ; this misfortune was averted by care, after much suffering. In 1782 she left school for Edgeworthstown, which was her home from this time until her death. She occupied herself in study, writing, assisting her father in the business of the estate, and teaching the younger children. (Her father " had, in all, twenty-two children born to him ; several died in infancy.")

In 1797 Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth died, and in the following year the perennial Benedick was married to Frances Anne Beaufort. In 1802 Maria went abroad with a family party, and while in Paris received an offer of marriage from M. Edelcrantz, a Swede, which she refused.

In 1813 the Edgeworths visited London, where Maria made the acquaintance of many of the well-known writers of the day. In 1817 Mr. Edgeworth died. His loss was very deeply felt by his devoted eldest daughter, and for a time she was unable to write without his wonted encouragement.

Little remains to chronicle except Maria's occasional visits to England, and her stay at Abbotsford in 1823. In 1825 Sir Walter Scott was her guest at Edgeworthstown. They travelled in company to the Lakes of Killarney, and parted in Dublin.

Maria Edgeworth died, very suddenly and painlessly, on May 22, 1849. She had driven out, in her usual health, a few hours before.

Miss Edgeworth's devotion to her father was beautiful indeed, but the complete subordination of her

genius to his guidance is to be regretted. We must, however, be too grateful for the brightness of this genuine jewel to quarrel with its over-heavy setting.

The following are her works :

Letters for Literary Ladies, 1795.

The Parents' Assistant, 1796.

Practical Education, 1798. This was the joint production of herself and her father.

Moral Tales.

Castle Rackrent, 1800.

Belinda, 1801.

Essay on Irish Bulls (a joint work), 1802.

Popular Tales, 1803.

The Modern Griselda, 1804.

Leonora, 1806.

Professional Education (a joint work), 1808.

Tales of Fashionable Life, 1809.

The Absentee, 1812.

Patronage, 1814.

Comic Dramas, 1817.

Harrington, about 1817.

Ormond, " "

Thoughts on Bores, about 1817.

Memoir of R. L. Edgeworth (continuation of a Life begun by himself), 1820.

Rosamond, 1821. This was a sequel to her father's 'Early Lessons,' and was followed by 'Harry and Lucy.'

Helen, 1834.

She was born on the 1st of January, 1767, "a God-given New-Year's gift" (as, in a letter to Mrs. Hall,

she calls herself), to her almost boy-father : for, although she was his second-born, he was barely twenty-two years old when she was placed in his arms. Ultimately she was one of twenty-two children born to Richard Lovell Edgeworth by four wives.

S. C. HALL : 'Retrospect of a Long Life.' New York : D. Appleton & Co., 1883.

Maria, being very young, remembered little of this visit [to Ireland in 1773, after her mother's death and her father's marriage to Honora Sneyd], "except that she was a mischievous child, amusing herself once at her Aunt Fox's, when the company were unmindful of her, cutting out the squares in a checked sofa-cover, and one day trampling through a number of hot-bed frames that had just been glazed, laid on the grass before the door at Edgeworthstown. She recollected her delight at the crashing of the glass, but, immorally, did not remember either cutting her feet, or how she was punished for this performance."

GRACE A. OLIVER : 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.' Boston : A. Williams & Co., 1882.

She was duly tortured on back-boards, pinioned in iron collars, made to use dumb-bells, and some rather stringent measures were taken to draw out her muscles and increase her stature. In vain ; by nature she was a small woman, and small she remained. She also learnt to dance with grace in the days when dancing was something more dignified than a tearing romp, but

music she failed in utterly. She had no taste for this art, and her music master, with a wisdom unhappily too rare, advised her to abandon the attempt to learn. She had been so well grounded in French and Italian, that when she came to do the exercises set her, she found them so easy that she wrote out at once those intended for the whole quarter, keeping them strung together in her desk, and unstringing them as required. The spare time thus secured, was employed in reading for her own pleasure. Her favorite seat during play-time was under a cabinet, which stood in the school-room, and here she often remained so absorbed in her book as to be deaf to all uproar. This early habit of concentrated attention was to stand her in good stead through life.

HELEN ZIMMERN : 'Maria Edgeworth.' (Famous Women Series.) Boston : Roberts Bros., 1883.

I beg that you will send me a little tale, about the length of a 'Spectator,' upon the subject of *Generosity* ; it must be taken from his-^{First stories.} tory or romance, and must be sent the sennight after you receive this ; and I beg you will take some pains about it.

Letter from Richard Lovell Edgeworth in 1780. . . . This was Maria's first story, and unfortunately it was not preserved. She used to say "there was in it a sentence of inextricable confusion between a saddle, a man, and his horse."

She was remembered by her companions at both schools [Mrs. Latiffiere's, at Derby, and Mrs. Davis's, Upper Wimpole Street, London], for her entertaining stories ; and she learned to know what tale was most

successful with her hearers, by the wakefulness it caused. These stories were told at bed-time. Many of her narrations were taken from her memory—she devoured books while her friends played—but very many were original. The spirit of the *raconteur* was strong, and she had early the fertile brain of the true novelist.

Mr. Edgeworth was essentially a utilitarian. He was a practical illustration of Bentham's theories. When he wrote the letter to his daughter, by Mrs. Honora Edgeworth's death-bed, the stress he lays upon usefulness will easily be observed. [*"Continue, my dear daughter, the desire which you*
Her father's influence. *feel of becoming amiable, prudent, and of use."*] He was a busy man himself, full of projects and plans. He impressed these views on the developing mind of Maria. Mme. de Staël was reported long after to have said Maria was "lost in sad utility"; and the question naturally comes to the mind, when we see the irrepressible imagination of the young girl, just what her life would have been without her father's peculiar influence. . . . He checked that superabundance of sentiment which would have endangered her clearness of mind; he kept her stimulated and encouraged to write, by his advice, criticism, and approbation; but it is to be feared that he clipped the wings of fancy, and harnessed Pegasus once again, as the rustics did in an ancient myth. When she failed in her novels to inspire her characters with romantic interest, it was because the paramount influence of her father asserted itself. She was certainly gifted with genius of a high order; but her nature was most affectionate, and long

habits of respect and devotion to her father made it absolutely impossible for her to free herself from *his* views. She was always the dutiful daughter—quite as much so to the last as at the time he wrote her of his desire for the tale on “Generosity.”

GRACE A. OLIVER: ‘A Study of Maria Edgeworth.’

“Nobody can know what I owe to my father: he advised and directed me in everything; I never could have done any thing without him. ^{Her filial} These are things I cannot be mistaken ^{gratitude.} about, though other people can—I *know* them.” As she said this the tears stood in her eyes, and her whole person was moved.

GEORGE TICKNOR: ‘Life, Letters and Journals.’ Boston: James R. Osgood & Co., 1876.

I am perfectly well inclined to agree with you in laying the tiresome parts of her work to her prosing father, who is, Mr. Moore tells me, such a nuisance in society, that in Ireland the person who is doomed to sit next him at dinner is consoled with, just as if he had met with an overturn, or a fall from his horse, or any other deplorable casualty. ^{Miss Mitford speaks her mind.}

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD: *Letter to Sir Wm. Elford*, in L’Estrange’s ‘Life of Mary Russell Mitford.’ London: Richard Bentley, 1870.

In 1782 Maria was taken from school, and accompanied her parents and younger brothers and sisters to Edgeworthstown. ^{Maria impressed with Irish life.} Her first visit to Ireland was made at an exceedingly early age. This was practically her

real introduction to the scenes of her future life, the home of her fathers. She was at the age when one is apt to notice new objects and people with keen interest ; and her new mode of life among the Irish quickened all her thoughts, and roused her eager and animated nature. She was very much struck by the many and extraordinary sights she saw—the remarkable difference between the Irish and English character. The wit, the melancholy, and gayety of the Irish were all so new and strange to the young girl, accustomed to the stolid and unvarying manners of the English servants, and the reserve and silence of the upper classes, that the penetrating genius and powers of observation of the future novelist and delineator of Irish character were vividly impressed with her new surroundings.

GRACE A. OLIVER : 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

Some men live with their families without letting them know their affairs, and, however great may be their affection and esteem for their wives and children, think that they have nothing to do with business. This was not my father's way of thinking. On the contrary,

Business habits. not only his wife, but his children, knew all his affairs. Whatever business he had to do was done in the midst of his family, usually in the common sitting-room : so that we were intimately acquainted, not only with his general principles of conduct, but with the minute details of their every-day application. I further enjoyed some peculiar advantages : he kindly wished to give me habits of business ; and for this purpose allowed

me, during many years, to assist him in copying his letters of business, and in receiving his rents.

MARIA EDGEWORTH : 'Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth.' Boston : Wells & Lilly, 1821.

I flatter myself that you will find me gratefully exact *en belle-fille*. . . You need not, my dear Miss Beaufort, fence yourself round with stony palings in this family, where all have been early accustomed to mind their boundaries. As ^{Maria accepts a young step-mother.} for me, you see my intentions, or at least my theories, are good enough. If my practice be but half as good, you will be content, will you not ? But theory was born in Brobdignag, and practice in Lilliput. So much the better for me. [She alludes to her small stature.]

MARIA EDGEWORTH : *Letter to Miss Beaufort*, quoted in 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

I had, on entering, no eyes for any one but her. I had persuaded myself that the author of the work on education, and of other productions, useful as well as ornamental, would betray herself by a ^{Maria in} remarkable exterior. I was mistaken. A ^{1802.} small figure, eyes nearly always lowered, a profoundly modest and reserved air, little expression in the features when not speaking : such was the result of my first survey. But when she spoke, which was much too rarely for my taste, nothing could have been better thought, and nothing better said, though always timidly expressed, than that which fell from her mouth.

MARC AUGUSTE PICTET : 'Voyage de Trois Mois en

Angleterre,' translated by Grace A. Oliver in 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

Here, my dear aunt, I was interrupted in a manner that will surprise you as much as it surprised me, by the coming in of M. Edelcrantz, a Swedish gentleman, whom we have mentioned to you, of superior understanding and mild manners : he came to
A little romance. offer me his hand and heart ! My heart, you may suppose, cannot return his attachment ; for I have seen but little of him, and have not had time to have formed any judgment, except that I think nothing could tempt me to leave my own dear friends and my own country to live in Sweden.

MARIA EDGEWORTH : *Letter to Mrs. Ruxton*, quoted in 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

Maria was mistaken as to her own feelings. She refused M. Edelcrantz, but she felt much more for him than esteem and admiration ; she was exceedingly in love with him. Mr. Edgeworth left her to decide for herself ; but she saw too plainly what it would be to us to lose her, and what she would feel at parting from us. . . . She suffered much at the time, and long afterwards. . . . 'Leonora,' which she began immediately after our return home, was written with the hope of pleasing the Chevalier Edelcrantz : it was written in a style he liked ; and the idea of what he would think of it was, I believe, present to her in every page she wrote. She never heard that he had even read it. . . . I do not think she ever repented of her refusal or regretted her decision : she was well aware that she could not have made him happy, that she would not

have suited his position at the court of Stockholm, and that her want of beauty might have diminished his attachment. It was better, perhaps, that she should think so, as it calmed her mind ; but, from what I saw of M. Edelcrantz, I think he was a man capable of deeply valuing her. . . He never married. He was, except very fine eyes, remarkably plain. Her father rallied Maria about her preference of so ugly a man ; but she liked the expression of his countenance, the spirit and strength of his character, and his very able conversation. The unexpected mention of his name, or even that of Sweden, in a book or newspaper, always moved her so much that the words and lines in the page became a mass of confusion before her eyes, and her voice lost all power.

MRS. EDGEWORTH : ‘Memoir,’ quoted in ‘A Study of Maria Edgeworth.’

The Edgeworths . . . are staying in London, and the daughter gains the good-will of every one ; not so the father. They dined at Sotheby’s. After dinner Mr. Edgeworth was sitting next Mrs. Siddons, Sam Rogers being on the other side of her.

“Madam,” said he, “I think I saw you perform ‘Millamont’ thirty-five years ago.”—“Pardon me, sir.”—“Oh! then it was forty years ago: I distinctly recollect it.”—“You will excuse me, sir, I never played ‘Millamont.’”—“Oh, yes! madam, I recollect.”—“I think,” she said, turning to Mr. Rogers, “it is time for me to change my place;” and she rose with her own peculiar dignity.

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON : ‘Diary and Correspond-

ence, 'edited by T. Sadler. Boston : J. R. Osgood & Co., 1871.

In 1813 I recollect to have met them in the fashionable world of London. . . . I thought Edgeworth a fine old fellow, of a clarety, elderly, red complexion, but active, brisk, and endless. He was seventy, but did not look fifty,—no, nor forty-eight even. . . . Edgeworth bounced about and talked loud and long ; . . . he seemed neither weakly nor decrepit, and hardly old.

He began by telling "that he had given Dr. Parr a dressing, who had taken him for an Irish bog-trotter," etc. Now I, who know Dr. Parr, and who know . . . that it is not so easy a matter to dress him, thought Mr. Edgeworth an asserter of what was not true. He could not have stood before Parr an instant. For the rest, he seemed intelligent, vehement, vivacious and full of life. He bids fair for a hundred years.

He was not much admired in London ; and I remember a "ryght merrie" and conceited jest which was rife among the gallants of the day ; viz., a paper had been presented for the *recall of Mrs. Siddons to the stage*. Whereupon Thomas Moore, of profane and poetical memory, did propose . . . a similar paper . . . for the recall of Mr. Edgeworth to Ireland.

[Moore, in a foot-note, disclaims the authorship of the jest.]

The fact was, everybody cared more about *her*. She was a nice, little, unassuming "Jeanie Deans

looking body," as we Scotch say, and if not handsome, certainly not ill-looking. Her conversation was as quiet as herself. One ^{Maria} would never have guessed that she ^{described.} could write *her name*; whereas her father talked, *not* as if he could write nothing else, but as if nothing else was worth writing.

As for Mrs. Edgeworth, I forget, except that I think she was the youngest of the party. Altogether, they were an excellent cage of the kind, and succeeded for two months, till the landing of Mme. de Staël.

LORD BYRON: *Diary*, 1821, in 'Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of His Life,' edited by Thomas Moore. New York: Harper & Bros., 1868.

Her face was pale and thin, her features irregular: they may have been considered plain, even in youth; but her expression was so benevolent, her manners were so perfectly well-bred, partaking of English dignity and Irish frankness, that one never thought of her with reference either to beauty or plainness. She ever occupied, without claiming attention, charming continually by her singularly pleasant voice; while the earnestness and truth that beamed from her bright blue—very blue—eyes increased the value of every word she uttered. . . . She was ever neat and particular in her dress; her feet and hands were so delicate and small as to be almost childlike.

MRS. S. C. HALL: 'Book of Memories.' London: Virtue & Co., 1871.

Her personal appearance was that of a woman plain of dress, sedate in manners, and remarkably small of

person. She told us an anecdote on that head. Travelling in a mail-coach, there was a little boy, also a passenger, who, wanting to take something from the seat, asked her if she would be so kind as to stand up. "Why, I am standing up," she answered. The lad looked at her with astonishment, and then, realizing the verity of her declaration, broke out with: "Well, you are the very littlest lady I ever did see!"

S. C. HALL: 'Retrospect of a Long Life.'

Miss Edgeworth's personal appearance was not attractive; but her vivacity, good humor, and cleverness in conversation quite equalled my expectations. I should say she was more sprightly and brilliant than refined. She excelled in the raciness of Irish humor, but the great defect of her manner, as it seemed to me, was an excess of compliment, or what in Ireland is called "blarney"; and in one who had moved in the best circles, both as to manners and mind, it surprised me not a little.

MRS. FLETCHER: 'Autobiography.' Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1876.

We saw, you will readily suppose, a great deal of Miss Edgeworth, and two very nice girls, her younger sisters. It is scarcely possible to say more of this very remarkable person than that she not only completely answered, but exceeded, the expectations which I had formed. I am particularly pleased with the *naïveté* and good-humored ardor of mind, which she unites with such formidable powers of acute observation. In external appearance she is quite the fairy of our nursery-tale,—the Whip-

**The Whip-
pity Stourie.**

pity Stourie, if you remember such a sprite, who came flying through the window to work all sorts of marvels. I will never believe but what she has a wand in her pocket, and pulls it out to conjure a little before she begins to draw those very striking pictures of manners.

SIR WALTER SCOTT : *Letter to Joanna Baillie*, 1823, in the former's 'Memoirs,' by J. G. Lockhart. Edinburgh : Adam and Charles Black, 1871.

Miss Edgeworth was delightful, so clever and sensible. She does not say witty things, but there is such a perfume of wit runs through all her conversation as makes it very brilliant.

Conversa-
tion.

SIDNEY SMITH : Quoted in 'Memoir,' by his daughter, Lady Holland. London : Longmans, Green & Co.

We could but liken her to the benevolent fairy from whose lips were perpetually dropping diamonds ; there was so much of kindly wisdom in every sentence she uttered.

S. C. HALL : 'Retrospect of a Long Life.'

In the evening Miss Edgeworth delightful—not from display, but from repose and unaffectedness—the least pretending person of the company.

THOMAS MOORE : *Extract from Diary*, 1818.

Miss Edgeworth, with all her cleverness, is anything but agreeable. The moment any one begins to speak, off she starts too, seldom more than a sentence behind them, and in general continues to distance every speaker. Neither does what she says, though of

course very sensible, at all make up for this over-activity of tongue.

THOMAS MOORE: *Extract from Diary*, 1831, in 'Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence,' edited by Lord John Russell. London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1854.

In conversation we found her delightful. She was full of anecdotes about remarkable people, and often spoke from her personal knowledge of them. Her memory, too, was stored with valuable information; and her manner of narrating was so animated that it was difficult to realize her age. In telling an anecdote of Mirabeau, she stepped out before us, and, extending her arms, spoke a sentence of his in the impassioned manner of a French orator, and did it so admirably that it was quite thrilling.

ELIZA FARRAR: 'Recollections of Seventy Years.' Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1866.

There was a life and spirit about her conversation, she threw herself into it with such *abandon*, she retorted with such brilliant repartee, and, in short, she talked with such extraordinary flow of natural talent, that I don't know whether anything of the kind could be finer.

GEORGE TICKNOR: 'Life, Letters and Journals.'

There was a charm in all she looked and said and did. Incessant and yet genial activity was a marked feature of her nature. She seemed to be as nearly

Activity. ubiquitous as a human creature can be, and always busy; not only as a teacher of her younger

brothers and sisters (she was nearly fifty years older than one of them), but as the director and controller of the household.

S. C. HALL : 'Retrospect of a Long Life.'

I have not the pen of our friend Miss Edgeworth, who writes all the while she laughs, talks, eats and drinks, and I believe, though I do not pretend to be so far in the secret, all the time she sleeps, too. She has good luck in having a pen which walks at once so unwearily and so well.

SIR WALTER SCOTT : *Letter to Joanne Baillie*, in the former's 'Memoirs,' by J. G. Lockhart.

What do you think is my employment out of doors, and what it has been this week past ? My garden ? No such elegant thing : but making a gutter, a sewer, and a pathway, in the street of Edgeworthstown ; and I do declare I am as much interested about it as I ever was in writing anything in my life. We have never here yet found it necessary to have recourse to public contributions for the poor ; but it is necessary to give some assistance to the laboring class, and I find that making the said gutter and pathway will employ twenty men for three weeks.

MARIA EDGEWORTH : *Letter*, quoted in 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

Edgeworthstown was, and is, a large country mansion, to which additions have been from time to time made, but made judiciously. An avenue of venerable trees leads to it from the public road. It is distant about seven miles from the town of Longford. The only room I need specially refer to is the library : it belonged

The Edgeworth home-
stead in
1842.

more peculiarly to Maria, although the general sitting-room of the family. It was the room in which she did nearly all her work ; not only that which was to gratify and instruct the world, but that which, in a measure, regulated the household. It is by no means a stately, solitary room, but large, spacious, and lofty, well stored with books, and furnished with suggestive engravings. Seen through the window is the lawn, embellished by groups of trees. If you look at the oblong table in the centre, you will see the rallying-point of the family, who are usually around it, reading, writing, or working ; while Miss Edgeworth, only anxious that the inmates of the house shall each do exactly as he or she pleases, sits in her own peculiar corner on the sofa : a pen given her by Sir Walter Scott while a guest at Edgeworthstown (in 1825) is placed before her on a little, quaint, unassuming table, constructed, and added to, for convenience.

MR. AND MRS. S. C. HALL : ‘ Book of Memories.’

For a long time Miss Edgeworth used a little desk in this room, on which, two years before her father’s death, he inscribed the following words :

“ On this humble desk were written all the numerous works of my daughter, Maria Edgeworth, in the **Maria’s desk.** common sitting-room of my family. In these works, which were chiefly written to please me, she has never attacked the personal character of any human being, or interfered with the opinions of any sect or party, religious or political ; while endeavoring to inform and instruct others, she improved and amused her own mind and gratified her heart, which I do believe, is better than her head.

“ R. L. E.”

After Mr. Edgeworth's death she used a writing-desk which had belonged to him; and it was placed on a table of his construction, to which she added a bracket for her candlestick, and other little conveniences.

GRACE A. OLIVER : 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

The house and many of its arrangements—the bells, the doors, etc.—bear witness to that love of mechanical trifling of which Mr. Edgeworth was so often accused. It was only this morning that I fully learnt how to open, shut, and lock our chamber-door; and the dressing-glass, at which I have shaved for three mornings, is somewhat of a mystery to me still.

GEORGE TICKNOR : 'Life, Letters and Journals.'

When shown to our bedroom, we found such an extraordinary lock on the door that we dared not shut it for fear of not being able to open it again. We were shown other contrivances of the former owner, such as a door in the entrance hall (through which the servants were continually passing), the motion of which wound up a clock, the face being over the sideboard, in the dining-room. Several doors in the house were made double, in a way that I could not see the use of. Two doors were fastened together at the hinge side, making a right angle with each other, so that in opening one door you shut the other, and had to open that before you could enter, and when that opened the one behind you shut. Miss Edgeworth said it was for safety in times of danger. She always mentioned her father with great respect, and even reverence, in her

manner ; but nothing that I saw or heard there raised my opinion of him.

ELIZA FARRAR : ' Recollections of Seventy Years.'

She had a singular power of abstraction ; apparently hearing all that was said, and occasionally taking part in the conversation, while pursuing her own occupation, and seemingly attending only to it. Now and then she would rise and leave the room, perhaps to procure a toy for one of the children, to mount the ladder and bring down a book that could explain or illustrate some topic on which some one was conversing : immediately she would resume her pen, and continue to write as if the thought had been unbroken for an instant.

MR. AND MRS. S. C. HALL : ' Book of Memories.'

It was her custom to get up at seven, take a cup of coffee, read her letters, and then walk out about three quarters of an hour before breakfast. So **Daily life.** punctual and regular was she that for many years a lady residing in the village used to be roused by her maid with the words, " Miss Edgeworth's walking, ma'am ; it's eight o'clock." She generally returned with her hands full of roses or other flowers that she had gathered, and taking her needle-work or knitting, would sit down at the family breakfast, a meal that was a special favorite of hers, though she rarely partook of anything. But while the others were eating she delighted to read out to them such extracts from the letters she had received as she thought would please them. She listened, too, while

the newspaper was read aloud, although its literary and scientific contents always attracted her more than its political ; for in politics, except Irish, she took little interest.

HELEN ZIMMERN : ' Maria Edgeworth.'

After breakfast she sat down to write, and worked till luncheon-time ; and after that meal occupied herself with some needle-work, as experience taught her that writing immediately after eating was bad for her. At times her anxiety about a certain piece of work, an interesting dialogue, or some half-finished character or scene, made her very unwilling to defer her writing ; but this was her rule. A drive in the afternoon, in later years, was a pleasant relaxation : in early life she rode with her father, but natural timidity about horses made her a poor horsewoman. The rest of the day was passed much as other ladies pass their time. She dined, took tea with the family, and passed the evening in conversation, or listening to reading. . . . Maria was always busy with a little piece of work with which she occupied herself during hours of leisure from writing, or while she listened to reading aloud. These busy fingers wrought many a piece of embroidery or fine needle-work, while the brain wove the web of fancies bright or serious ; many a scene of lively dialogue, clever character-painting, or pathetic description, passed into the clear words in which it later appeared on the pages of tale or novel, while the hand was rapidly moving in some womanly bit of needle-work.

GRACE A. OLIVER : ' A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

At last we approached the house. It is spacious, with an ample veranda and conservatory covering part of its front quite beautifully, and situated in a fine lawn of the richest green, interspersed with clumps of venerable oaks and beeches. As we drove to the door, Miss Edgeworth came out to meet us,—a small, short, spare lady of about sixty-seven, with extremely frank and kind manners, and who always looks straight into your face with a pair of mild, deep gray eyes, whenever she speaks to you.

Miss Edgeworth in 1821.

GEORGE TICKNOR : ‘ Life, Letters, and Journals.’

Miss Edgeworth . . . carried herself very upright, with a dapper figure and quick movements.

She was the remains of a blonde, with light eyes and hair ; she was now gray,

Never sat for her portrait.

but wore a dark frisette, whilst the gray hair showed through her cap behind. She was so plain that she was never willing to sit for her portrait, and that is the reason why the public has never been made acquainted with her personal appearance.

ELIZA FARRAR : ‘ Recollections of Seventy Years.’

Her person is small and delicately proportioned, and her movements full of animation. She has an aversion to having her likeness taken, which no entreaties of her friends have been able to overcome. In one of her notes she says, “ I have always refused even my own family to sit for my portrait, and with my own good-will, shall never have it painted ; as I do not think it would give either my friends or the public any representation or expression of my mind,

such as I trust may be more truly found in my writings."

MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY : 'Pleasant Memories of Pleasant Lands.' Boston: James Munroe & Co., 1844.

We went to church with the family, who all seemed Episcopalians in principle and practice. Miss Edgeworth carried her favorite prayer-book in a nice case, and knelt and made all the responses very devoutly. The church is small, but ^{A good} churchwo-
neat ; and their pew is the place of honor ^{man.}
in it, with a canopy and recess as large as any two other pews. . . . The Edgeworths have always been on the most kindly terms with their Catholic neighbors and tenantry.

GEORGE TICKNOR : 'Life, Letters and Journals.'

I attended with much interest to the conversation of this remarkable woman. She was little and possessed of no personal attractions ; it was evident that the usual feminine objects had never interfered with her masculine understanding. Her conversation was ^{A masculine} chiefly remarkable for its acuteness, good ^{understand-}
sense and practical sagacity. She had ^{ing and no} little imagination and scarcely any enthusiasm.
^{enthusiasm.} Solid sense, practical acquirement—the qualities which will lead to success in the world—were her great endowments, and they appeared at every turn in her conversation, as they do in her writings. This disposition of mind kept her free from the usual littlenesses of authors and raised her far above the ordinary vanity of woman. She was simple and unaffected in her manners, entirely free from conceit or effort in her conversation, and

kindly and benevolent in her judgment of others, as well as in her views of life and in her intercourse with all around her. But she had neither a profound knowledge of human nature nor the elevated mental qualities which give a lasting ascendancy over mankind.

SIR ARCHIBALD ALISON : ' Some Account of My Life and Writings : an Autobiography.' Wm. Blackwood & Sons : Edinburgh and London, 1883.

She is full of fun and spirit ; very good-humored, and full of enthusiasm.

Full of enthusiasm. SIR WALTER SCOTT : *Letter to D. Terry*, in the former's ' Memoirs,' by J. G. Lockhart.

Maria Edgeworth came frequently to see us when she was in England. She was one of my most intimate friends, warm-hearted and kind, a charming companion, with all the liveliness and originality of an Irishwoman. The cleverness and animation, as well as affection, of her letters, I cannot express.

Warm-hearted and clever. MARY SOMERVILLE : ' Personal Recollections, from Early Life to Old Age.' Boston : Roberts Bros., 1874.

Miss Edgeworth never needed to follow authorship as a profession ; its pecuniary results were of no moment to her, and hence she was spared all the bitterness and incidental anxieties of an author's life, the working when the brain should rest, the imperative need to go on, no matter whether there be aught to say or not. Her

Attitude toward authorship.

path, in this respect, as in all others, traversed the high roads of life. Fame at once succeeded effort ; the heart-sickness of hope deferred was never hers ; she was therefore neither soured nor embittered by feeling within herself powers which the world was unwilling or slow to acknowledge.

HELEN ZIMMERN : ‘ Maria Edgeworth.’

Whenever I thought of writing anything I always told my father my first rough plans ; and always, with the instinct of a good critic, he used to fix immediately upon that which would best answer the purpose. “ Sketch that, and show it to ^{Method of} ~~working~~ ^{with her} me.” The words, from the experience ^{father.} of his sagacity, never failed to inspire me with hope of success. It was then sketched. Sometimes, when I was fond of a particular part, I used to dilate on it in the sketch, but to this he always objected. “ I don’t want any of your painting—none of your drapery ! I can imagine all that. Let me see the bare skeleton !” It seemed to me sometimes impossible that he could understand the very light sketch I made ; when, before I was conscious that I had expressed this doubt in my countenance, he always saw it. “ Now, my dear little daughter, I know, does not believe that I understand her.” Then he would in his own words fill up my sketch, paint the description, or represent the character intended, with such life, that I was quite convinced he not only seized the ideas, but that he saw with the prophetic eye of taste, the utmost that could be made of them.

HELEN ZIMMERN : ‘ Maria Edgeworth.’

'Helen,' written long after his death, would serve to reveal something of the effect which Mr. Edgeworth had on his daughter's writing. It shows a lighter hand, a greater ease in handling dialogue, and a more natural inconsistency in its characters, than she was allowed by her father. . . The hand of Miss Edgeworth had not lost its cunning, but her natural timidity was so great that she could not work after her life-long support was removed. She had accustomed herself to lean upon what she considered her father's superior knowledge of the world and literary judgment, until she was unfitted for independent literary work for a time.

GRACE A. OLIVER: 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

I have been reading, for the fourth time I believe, 'The Simple Story,' which I intended this time to read as a critic, that I might write to Mrs. ^{Reads} ^{'A simple} Inchbald about it; but I was so carried ^{Story.'} away by it that I . . . cried my eyes almost out before I came to the end. . . . I was obliged to go from it to correct 'Belinda' for Mrs. Barbauld, who is going to insert it in her collection of novels, with a preface; and I really was so provoked with the cold tameness of that stick ^{Opinion of} ^{her own} ^{work.} or stone, 'Belinda,' that I could have torn the pages to pieces. And, really, I have not the heart or the patience to *correct* her. As the hackney coachman said, "Mend *you*! better make a new one."

MARIA EDGEWORTH: *Letter*, quoted in 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

In 1816 Maria received a letter from an American Jewess, a Miss Rachel Mordecai of Virginia, gently reproaching her with having made Jews ridiculous and odious in her novels and tales, and begging her to give the world a picture of a good Jew. This was the origin of the story of 'Harrington.' . . . Mr. Edgeworth had expressed a wish to Maria that she should write a story as a companion to 'Harrington'; and with all the anguish of heart which oppressed her natural spirits, at the sight of her father suffering such pain, and daily growing weaker, she made a strong effort to amuse him. By a wonderful exertion of love and genius, she produced the gay and spirited pages of 'Ormond'; among which may be found some of her most vivacious scenes, her inimitable characters. Wit, humor, and pathos made the story a bright entertainment for the sufferer; who could not have realized in a line of its pages the aching heart which dictated it. The book was read chapter by chapter in her father's room.

GRACE A. OLIVER : 'A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

I had often and often a suspicion that my manner was too Dutch, too minute. . . . I *know* I feel how much *more is to be done, ought to be done*, by suggestion than by delineation, by creative fancy than by *fac simile* copying; how much more by skilful selection and fresh, consistent combination, than can be effected by the most acute observation of individuals, or diligent accumulation of particulars.

Literary theories.

There are little touches of *inconsistency*, which mark

reality ; for human nature is really inconsistent. And there are *exceptions*, as in grammar rules. . . . The value of odd characters depends upon their being actually known to be true. In history, extraordinary characters always interest us with all their inconsistencies, feeling we thus add to our actual knowledge of human nature. In fiction, we have not this conviction, and therefore not this sort or source of pleasure, even if ever so well done.

Few readers do, or can, put themselves in the places of great criminals, or fear to yield to such and such temptations. They know that they cannot fall to the depth of evil at once, and they have no sympathy, no fear : their spirits are not "put in the act of falling." But show them the steep path, the little declivity at first, the step by step downwards ; and they tremble. Show them the postern-gate, or little breaches in their citadel of virtue ; and they fly to guard these. In short, show to them their own little faults which may lead on to the greatest, and they shudder ; that is, if this be done with truth, and brought home to their consciousness. This is all which, by reflection on my own mind, and comparison with others and with records in books, . . . I feel or fancy I have sometimes done or can do.

I have no "vast magazine of a commonplace book." In my whole life, since I began to write—which is now, I am concerned to state, upwards of forty years—I have had only about half a dozen little note-books, strangely and irregularly kept, sometimes with only words of reference to some book or fact I could not bring accurately to mind. At first I was much urged by my

"No commonplace book."

father to note down remarkable traits of character, or incidents, which he thought might be introduced in stories. But I was averse to noting down, because I was conscious that it did better for me to keep the things in my head if they suited my purpose ; and if they did not, they would only encumber me. I knew that when I wrote down, I put the thing out of my care, out of my head ; and that, though it might be put by very safe, I should not know where to look for it ; that the labor of looking over a note-book would never do when I was in the warmth and pleasure of inventing. In short, the process of combination, generalization, invention, was carried on always in my head best. . . . I never could use notes in writing dialogues. It would have been as impossible to me to get in the prepared good things at the right moment, in the warmth of writing conversation, as it would be to lay them in in real conversation ; perhaps more so, for I could not write dialogues at all without being at the time fully impressed with the characters, imagining myself each speaker ; and that too fully engrossed the imagination to leave time for consulting note-books : the whole fairy vision would melt away.

A curious fact, that where I least aimed at drawing characters, I succeeded best. As far as I have heard, the characters in ' Castle Rackrent ' were in their day considered as better classes of Irish characters than any I ever drew ; they cost me no trouble, and were made by no receipt, or thought of "philosophical classification" ; there was literally not a correction, not an alteration, made in the first writing, no copy, and, as I

"Castle
Rackrent"
not corrected
or copied.

recollect, no interlineation ; it went to the press just as it was written. Other stories I have corrected with the greatest care, and re-modelled and re-written. . . In every story (except ' Rackrent ') which I ever wrote, I have always drawn out a sketch, a frame-work. All these are in existence ; and I have lately compared many of the printed stories with them, some strangely altered, by the way.

MARIA EDGEWORTH : *Letter to Mrs. Stark*, quoted in ' A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

You excel, I think, peculiarly in avoiding what is commonly called *fine-writing*,—a sort of writing which I detest ; which calls the attention away from the *thing* to the *manner*, from the feeling to the language ; which sacrifices every thing to the sound, to the mere rounding of a period ; which mistakes *stage effect* for nature. All who are at all used to writing know and detect the *trick of the trade* immediately ; and, speaking for myself, I *know* that the writing which has least the appearance of literary *manufacture*, almost always pleases me the best. It has more originality ; in narration of fictitious events, it most surely succeeds in giving the idea of reality, and in making the biographer, for the time, pass for nothing. But there are few who can, in this manner, bear the *mortification* of staying behind the scenes. They peep out eager for appearance, and destroy the illusion by crying, *I* said it, *I* wrote it, *I* invented it all ! Call me on the stage and crown me directly !

MARIA EDGEWORTH : *Letter to Mrs. Inchbald*, quoted in ' A Study of Maria Edgeworth.'

Miss Edgeworth has done more good both to the higher and lower world than any writer since the days of Addison. She shoots at "folly as it flies," with the strong bolt of ridicule, and seldom misses her aim. Much as I admire the polished satire and nice discrimination of character in the 'Tales of Fashionable Life,' I prefer the homely pathos and plain morality of her 'Popular Tales.' The story of Rosanna is particularly delightful to me ; and that of 'To-morrow,' made so deep an impression on my mind, that, if it were possible for any earthly power to reform a procrastinator, I really think that tale would have cured me of my evil habits. . . . I delight in her works for the same reason that you admire them—her exquisite distinction of character ; whereas I am convinced that at least nine-tenths of her readers are caught solely by the humor of her dialogue and the liveliness of her illustrations.

Effect of the
'Moral
Tales.'

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, in the former's 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

Miss Edgeworth is somewhat too avowedly didactic : that seems to be true of her, which the French critics, in the extravagance of their conceits, attributed to Homer and Virgil, viz :— Too didactic. that they first thought of a moral, and then framed a fable to illustrate it ; she would, we think, instruct more successfully, and she would, we are sure, please more frequently, if she kept the design of teaching more out of sight, and did not so glaringly press every circumstance of her story, principal or subordinate, into the service of a principle

to be inculcated, or information to be given. . . . Miss Edgeworth's novels put us in mind of those clocks and watches which are condemned "a double or a treble debt to pay" ; which, besides their legitimate object, to show the hour, tell you the day of the month or the week, give you a landscape for a dial-plate, with the second-hand forming the sails of a wind-mill, or have a barrel to play a tune, or an alarum to remind you of an engagement : all very good things in their way ; but so it is that these watches never tell the time so well as those in which that is the exclusive object of the maker. Every additional movement is an obstacle to the original design.

SIR WALTER SCOTT : 'Miss Austen's Novels,' *London Quarterly Review*, January, 1821. 'Scott's Miscellanies,' vol. i. Philadelphia : Carey & Hart, 1841.

JANE AUSTEN.

1775—1817.

JANE AUSTEN.

Jane Austen may be said to have had the happiness of being without a history. No other English woman of letters ever lived a life so entirely uneventful. Its monotony was unbroken by travel, or by acquaintance or even correspondence with other writers. Its placid flow was never interrupted by love, or there is at least no surface-ripple to tell us of the fact. We learn from the memoir by her nephew, the Rev. J. E. Austen-Leigh, that she was the daughter of a Hampshire clergyman ; she had one sister, very dear to her, and several brothers, one of whom rose to the rank of admiral in the navy. Jane was born on the 16th of December, 1775. In the years 1796 and '97, before she was twenty-three years old, she wrote the novel *Pride and Prejudice* ; in 1797 and '98, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Northanger Abbey*. These works, however, waited fifteen years for a publisher ; and Jane, who wrote merely for her own amusement, seems to have possessed her soul in patience. In 1801 the family removed to Bath ; in 1805 the Rev. George Austen died, and they again removed to Southampton. In 1809 they settled at Chawton, Hampshire ; and in 1811 Jane was at length enabled to publish *Sense and Sensibility*. It was followed in 1813 by *Pride and Prejudice*. *Mansfield Park* appeared in 1814, and *Emma* in 1816.

Jane Austen died on the 18th of July, 1817. After her death her early novel *Northanger Abbey*, and *Persuasion*, a mature work which has the same mel-lower quality as *Emma*, together with a pathos peculiarly its own, were published.

From the testimony of her nephew and the internal evidence of her books, we may conclude Jane Austen to have been a decorous English gentlewoman, conservative in temper, essentially feminine ; a silent, humorous observer of the most minute details ; an affectionate daughter and sister and a delightful aunt ; at home " a still, sweet, placid moonlight face, and slightly nonchalant "—abroad, perhaps a trifle chilling. We may eke out the meagre record of her life with many praises, drawn from widely-differing sources. If some of these appear to us extravagant, and we are driven by reaction to complain of a certain superficiality in Miss Austen's writings, we should be disarmed by the recollection that she is never pretentious. No better example exists of a talent kept within its proper limitations. It has been well said, that her enclosed spot of English ground is indeed little, but never was verdure brighter or more velvety than its trim grass.

As the first twenty-five years, more than half of the brief life of Jane Austen, were spent in the parsonage of Steventon, some description of that place ought to be given. Steventon is a small rural village upon the chalk hills of North Hants, situated in a winding valley about seven miles from Basingstoke. . . . Of this somewhat tame country, Steventon, from the fall of the

Home at Ste-
venton.

ground and the abundance of its timber, is certainly one of the prettiest spots. The house itself stood in a shallow valley, surrounded by sloping meadows, well-sprinkled with elm trees, at the end of a small village of cottages, each well provided with a garden, scattered about prettily on either side of the road. . . . North of the house, the road from Deane to Popham Lane ran at a sufficient distance from the front to allow a carriage-drive through turf and trees. On the south side the ground rose gently, and was occupied by one of those old-fashioned gardens in which vegetables and flowers are combined, flanked and protected on the east by one of the thatched mud walls common in that country, and overshadowed by fine elms. Along the upper or southern side of this garden, ran a terrace of the finest turf, which must have been in the writer's thoughts when she described Catharine Morland's childish delight in "rolling down the green slope at the back of the house."

REV. J. E. AUSTEN-LEIGH: 'A Memoir of Jane Austen.' London: Richard Bentley, 1870.

When I knew Jane Austen, I never suspected that she was an authoress; but my eyes told me she was fair and handsome, slight and elegant, but with cheeks a little too full. The last ^{Appearance} in girlhood. time I think that I saw her was at Ramsgate in 1803: perhaps she was then about twenty-seven years old. Even then I did not know that she was addicted to literary composition.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES: 'Autobiography, Times, Opinions and Contemporaries.' London: Cochrane & M'Crane, 1834.

In person she was very attractive ; her figure was rather tall and slender, her step light and firm, and her

In later years. whole appearance expressive of health and animation. In complexion she was

a clear brunette, with a rich color ; she had full round cheeks, with mouth and nose small and well-formed, bright hazel eyes, and brown hair forming natural curls close round her face. If not so regularly handsome as her sister, yet her countenance had a peculiar charm of its own to the eyes of most beholders. At the time of which I am now writing [1809] she never was seen, either morning or evening, without a cap ; I believe that she and her sister were generally thought to have taken to the garb of middle-age earlier than their years or their looks required ; and that, though remarkably neat in their dress as in all their ways, they were scarcely sufficiently regardful of the fashionable, or the becoming. Dearest of all to the heart of Jane was her sister Cassandra, about three years her senior.

Attachment to her sister Cassandra.

Their sisterly affection for each other could scarcely be exceeded. Perhaps it began on Jane's side with the feeling of deference natural to a loving child towards a kind elder sister. Something of this feeling always remained ; and even in the maturity of her powers and the enjoyment of increasing success, she would still speak of Cassandra as of one wiser and better than herself. In childhood, when the elder was sent to the school of a Mrs. Latournelle, in the Torbury at Reading, the younger went with her not because she was thought old enough to profit much by the instruction there imparted, but because she would have been

miserable without her sister ; her mother observing that " if Cassandra were going to have her head cut off, Jane would insist on sharing her fate." This attachment was never interrupted or weakened. They lived in the same home and shared the same bedroom, till separated by death. They were not exactly alike. Cassandra's was the colder and calmer disposition ; she was always prudent and well judging, but with less demonstration of feeling and less sunniness of temper than Jane possessed. It was remarked in her family that " Cassandra had the *merit* of having her temper always under command, but that Jane had the *happiness* of a temper that never required to be commanded."

REV. J. E. AUSTEN-LEIGH : 'A Memoir of Jane Austen.'

The bond of sisterhood, more than any other relation, seems to have influenced Jane Austen in her art. With her own closest life-long friend in her sister Cassandra, the author who so ^{Its influence on her art.} rarely repeats herself in the circumscribed sphere in which she chose to work, again and again draws a pair of sisters, for the most part sharing every joy and sorrow. In two or three cases—those of the Bennets, the Dashwoods, Mrs. John Knightley and Emma Woodhouse, we have the contrast between the milder and more serene elder, and the livelier, more impulsive younger sister, which caused their contemporaries to say that Jane and Elizabeth Bennet stood for Cassandra and Jane Austen. But the author's nephew pronounced against this conjecture. It is said, indeed, that in gentleness

of disposition and tenderness of heart, Jane Austen bore more resemblance to Jane than to Elizabeth Bennet.

SARAH TYTLER : 'Jane Austen and Her Works.' Cassell & Company.

A friend of mine, who visits her now, says that she has stiffened into the most perpendicular, precise, taciturn piece of "single blessedness" that ever existed, and that, till 'Pride and Prejudice' showed what a precious gem was hidden in that unbending case, she was no more regarded in society than a poker or a fire-screen, or any other thin upright piece of wood or iron that fills its corner in peace and quietness. The case is very different now; she is still a poker, but a poker of whom every one is afraid. It must be confessed that this silent observation from such an observer is rather formidable. . . . After all, I do not know that I can quite vouch for this account, though the friend from whom I received it is truth itself; but her family connections must render her disagreeable to Miss Austen, since she is the sister-in-law of a gentleman who is at law with Miss A.'s brother for the greater part of his fortune.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir Wm. Elford*, 1815, in the former's 'Life,' by Rev. A. G. L'Estrange. London : Richard Bentley, 1870.

It was the conviction of the Austen family that Jane's occupation as a novel writer continued long unsuspected by her ordinary acquaintances and neighbors. That may have been, but we cannot

imagine that her close study of the characters around her, with her shrewd, humorous conclusions—so extraordinary at the age at ^{Possible un-}popularity. which she began to make them—could have been either quite unperceived or wholly approved of by her associates. . . . Jane Austen was the clear-sighted girl with the sharp pen, if not the sharp tongue, who found in the Steventon visiting-list materials for the *dramatis personæ* of ‘Pride and Prejudice.’ It would have been little short of a miracle, if she could have conducted herself with such meekness, in her remote rural world, or during the visits she paid to the great English watering-place—while she was all the time laughing in her sleeve—so as not to provoke any suspicion of her satire, or any resentment at what might easily be held her presumption. . . . I have it on excellent authority that, however thoroughly she was able to sympathize with the witty repartees of two of her favorite heroines, in general company she herself was shy and silent; even in more familiar circles she was innocent of speaking sharp words, and was rather distinguished for her tolerant indulgence to her fellow-creatures than for her hard judgments on them. The tolerance belonged, by right, to her breadth of comprehension, and to the humor which still more than wit characterized her genius. The suggestion I make is that, seeing her neighbor’s foibles, as she certainly did see them, she could not, however generously she might use her superior knowledge, conceal it altogether from her neighbors, and this was less likely to be the case when she was a young girl with some share, presumably, of the thoughtlessness and rashness of other girls, than

when she was a mature woman, with the wisdom and gentleness of experience.

SARAH TYTLER : 'Jane Austen and her Works.'

Chawton may be called the second, as well as the last home of Jane Austen ; for during the temporary residences of the party at Bath and South-
Home at Chawton.
 ampton she was only a sojourner in a strange land ; but here she found a real home among her own people. It so happened that during her residence at Chawton circumstances brought several of her brothers and their families within easy distance of the house. Chawton must also be considered the place most closely connected with her career as a writer ; for this is the place where, in the maturity of her mind, she either wrote or re-arranged, and prepared for publication the books by which she has become known to the world. This was the home where, after a few years, while still in the prime of life, she began to droop and wither away, and which she left only in the last stage of her illness, yielding to the persuasion of friends hoping against hope. This house stood in the village of Chawton, about a mile from Alton, on the right hand side, just where the road to Winchester branches off from that to Gosport. It was so close to the road that the front door opened at once upon it ; but behind it there was ample space for a garden and shrubbery walks.

REV. J. E. AUSTEN-LEIGH : 'A Memoir of Jane Austen.'

There is an anecdote of Jane Austen which coincides with her character, and has been widely circulated,

though it is not mentioned by Mr. Austen Leigh. If it had a foundation in fact, it must have occurred either during this visit to London [1815], or in the course of that paid not long before. It is said that Miss Austen received an invitation to a rout given by an aristocratic couple with whom she was not previously acquainted. The reason assigned for the invitation was that the author of 'Pride and Prejudice' might be introduced to the author of 'Corinne.' Tradition has it that the English novelist refused the invitation, saying that to no house where she was not asked as Jane Austen would she go as the author of 'Pride and Prejudice.' This anecdote is often quoted with marks of admiration for the author's independence. But even the most honest and honorable independence has its becoming limits. That of Jane Austen, ultra self-sufficing, fastidious, tinged with haughtiness, is just a trifle repellent out of that small circle in which she was always at home. Whether or not Mme. de Staël was consulted about the proposed meeting, she was not an admirer of her sister author. The somewhat grandiloquent Frenchwoman characterized the productions of that English genius—which were the essence of common-sense—as "*vulgaires*," precisely what they were not. . . . Apparently, Jane Austen was not one whit more accessible to English women of letters. There were many of deserved repute in or near London, at the dates of these later visits. Not to speak of Mrs. Inchbald, whom her correspondent, warm-hearted Maria Edgeworth, rejoiced to come to England and meet personally, there were the two Porters, Joanna Baillie—

Anecdote
illustrating
her pride.

Self centred
character.

at the representation of whose fine play, 'The Family Legend,' Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron had lately "assisted"—and the veteran writer, Mme. D'Arblay, whose creations were the object of Jane Austen's early and late admiration. But we do not hear of a single overture towards acquaintance between Miss Austen and these ladies, though her works must have left as lively an impression on some of their minds as theirs have done on hers. Men of letters were no better known to her.

SARAH TYTLER : 'Jane Austen and her Works.'

I cannot better describe the fascination which she exercised over children than by quoting the words of **Fondness** two of her nieces. One says: "As a **for children.** very little girl I was always creeping up to Aunt Jane, and following her whenever I could, in the house and out of it. I might not have remembered this but for the recollection of my mother's telling me privately, that I must not be troublesome to my aunt. Her first charm to children was great sweetness of manner. She seemed to love you, and you loved her in return. This, as well as I can now recollect, was what I felt in my early days, before I was old enough to be amused by her cleverness. But soon came the delight of her playful talk. She could make everything amusing to a child. Then, as I got older, when cousins came to share the entertainment, she would tell us the most delightful stories, chiefly of Fairyland, and her fairies had all characters of their own. The tale was invented, I am sure, at the moment, and was continued for two or three days, if occasion

served." Very similar is the testimony of another niece.

REV. J. E. AUSTEN-LEIGH : 'A Memoir of Jane Austen.'

In her family and among her old friends Jane Austen was unsurpassed as a tender sick-nurse, an untiring confidante, and a wise counsellor. . . . During her whole life she remained ^{Slight} narrowness. to a great extent engrossed by the interests of her family and their limited circle of old and intimate friends. This was as it should be—so far, but there may be too much of a good thing. The tendency of restricted family parties and sets—when their members are above small bickerings and squabbings—when they are really superior people in every sense, is to form 'mutual admiration' societies, and neither does this more respectable and aimable weakness act beneficially upon its victims. . . . Fondly loved and remembered as Jane Austen has been, with much reason among her own people, in their considerable ramifications, I cannot imagine her as greatly liked, or even regarded with anything save some amount of prejudice, out of the immediate circle of her friends, and in general society. . . . What I mean is, that she allowed her interests and sympathies to become narrow, even for her day, and that her tender charity not only began, but ended, in a large measure, at home.

SARAH TYTLER : 'Jane Austen and Her Works.'

The style is always clear, and generally animated, while a vein of humor continually gleams through

the whole ; but the materials may be thought inferior to the execution, for they treat only **Her letters.** of the details of domestic life. There is in them no notice of politics or public events ; scarcely any discussions on literature, or other subjects of general interest. They may be said to resemble the nest which some little bird builds of the materials nearest at hand, of the twigs and mosses supplied by the tree in which it is placed ; curiously constructed out of the simplest matters. . . . Her letters scarcely ever have the date of the year, and are never signed with her Christian name at full length.

Happy would the compositors for the press be if they had always so legible a manuscript to work from. But the writing was not the only part of her letters which showed superior handiwork. In those days there was an art in folding and sealing. No adhesive envelopes made all easy. Some people's letters always looked loose and untidy ; but her paper was sure to take the right folds, and her sealing-wax to drop into the right place.

Jane Austen was successful in everything that she attempted with her fingers. None of us could throw **A steady hand.** spilikins in so perfect a circle, or take them off with so steady a hand. Her performances with cup and ball were marvellous. The one used at Chawton was an easy one, and she has been known to catch it on the point above an hundredth time in succession, till her hand was weary. She sometimes found a resource in this simple game, when unable, from weakness in her eyes, to read or write long together. . . . Her needlework, both plain and ornamental, was excellent, and

might almost have put a sewing machine to shame. She was considered especially great in satin-stitch. She spent much time in these occupations, and some of her merriest talk was over clothes which **Her needle-** she and her companions were making, **work.** sometimes for themselves and sometimes for the poor. There still remains a curious specimen of her needlework made for a sister-in-law, my mother. In a very small bag is deposited a little rolled-up housewife, furnished with minikin needles and fine thread. In the housewife is a tiny pocket, and in the pocket is enclosed a slip of paper, on which, written as with a crow quill, are these lines :

“ This little bag, I hope, will prove
To be not vainly made,
For should you thread and needles want
It will afford you aid.

“ And as we are about to part,
'Twill serve another end :
For, when you look upon this bag,
You'll recollect your friend.”

It is the kind of article that some benevolent fairy might be supposed to give as a reward to a diligent little girl. The whole is of flowered silk, and having been never used and carefully preserved, it is as fresh and bright as when it was first made seventy years ago, and shows that the same hand which painted so exquisitely with the pen could work as delicately with the needle.

Jane was fond of music, and had a sweet voice, both in singing and in conversation ; in her youth she had received some instruction on the piano-forte ; and at

Chawton she practised daily, chiefly before breakfast. I believe she did so partly that she ~~Her accom-~~ might not disturb the rest of the party who ~~plishments.~~ were less fond of music. In the evening she would sometimes sing, to her own accompaniment, some simple old songs, the words and airs of which, now never heard, still linger in my memory.

She read French with facility, and knew something in Italian. . . . In history she followed the old guides—Goldsmith, Hume and Robertson. Critical enquiry into the usually received statements of the old historians was scarcely begun. . . . Jane, when a girl, had strong political opinions, especially about the affairs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She was a vehement defender of Charles I. and his grandmother Mary; but I think it was rather from an impulse of feeling than from any enquiry into the evidence by which they must be condemned or acquitted. As she grew up, the politics of the day occupied very little of her attention, but she probably shared the feeling of moderate Toryism which prevailed in her family.

REV. J. E. AUSTEN-LEIGH: 'A Memoir of Jane Austen.'

I think I may boast myself to be, with all possible vanity, the most unlearned and uninformed ~~A modest~~ female who ever dared to be an authoress. ~~opinion.~~

JANE AUSTEN: *Letter to Mr. J. S. Clarke*, quoted in 'Memoir,' by Austen-Leigh.

She was well acquainted with the old periodicals, from the 'Spectator' downward. Her knowledge of Richardson's works was such as no one is likely again to acquire, now that the multitude and the merits

of our light literature have called off the attention of readers from that great master. Every circumstance narrated in Sir Charles Grandison, all that ever was said or ^{Taste in reading.} done in the cedar parlor, was familiar to her ; and the wedding-days of Lady L. and Lady G. were as well remembered as if they had been living friends. Amongst her favorite writers, Johnson in prose, Crabbe in verse, and Cowper in both, stood high. It is well that the native good taste of herself and of those with whom she lived, saved her from the snare into which a sister novelist had fallen, of imitating the grandiloquent style of Johnson. She thoroughly enjoyed Crabbe ; perhaps on account of a certain resemblance to herself in minute and highly finished detail ; and would sometimes say, in jest, that if she ever married at all, she could fancy being Mrs. Crabbe ; looking on the author quite as an abstract idea, and ignorant and regardless what manner of man he might be. Scott's poetry gave her great pleasure ; she did not live to make much acquaintance with his novels.

REV. J. E. AUSTEN-LEIGH : 'A Memoir of Jane Austen.'

There were twenty dances, and I danced them all, and without any fatigue. I was glad to find myself capable of dancing so much, and with so much satisfaction as I did ; from my ^{Love of dancing.} slender enjoyment of the Ashford balls, I had not thought myself equal to it, but in cold weather and with few couples I fancy I could just as well dance for a week together as for half an hour.

JANE AUSTEN : *Letter to her sister, Cassandra, 1799,*

in 'Letters of Jane Austen,' edited by Lord Bra-
 bourne. London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1884.

Jane Austen was able to write in the midst of a
 busily-talking roomful of people, her desk sometimes
 on a table which she shared with others,
Manner of working. sometimes at one side of the room, or
 even upon her knee when there was no other place
 for it; and under what might seem to many others
 impossible social conditions or distractions, she
 wrote 'Sense and Sensibility,' 'Northanger Ab-
 bey,' and 'Pride and Prejudice,' all works show-
 ing concentration and keen perception. A friend
 has told us of her manner in writing—the earnest face
 bent above her page, the keen bright eye suddenly
 lifted to flash out recognition of something which was
 said in her presence, showing how entirely possible it
 was for her to hear and heed as well.

ANON.: in *Harper's Bazar*.

The last five years of her life produced the same
 number of novels with those which had been written
 in her early youth. How she was able
No "den" for writing. to effect all this is surprising, for she
 had no separate study to retire to, and most of
 the work must have been done in the general sit-
 ting-room, subject to all kinds of casual interrup-
 tions. She was not, however, troubled with com-
 panions like her own Mrs. Allen, in 'Northanger
 Abbey,' whose "vacancy of mind and incapacity
 for thinking were such that, as she never talked a great
 deal, so she could never be entirely silent; and there-
 fore, while she sat at work, if she lost her needle, or
 broke her thread, or saw a speck of dirt on her gown,

she must observe it, whether there were any one at leisure to answer her or not." In that well-occupied female party there must have been many precious hours of silence during which the pen was busy at the little mahogany writing-desk, while Fanny Price, or Emma Woodhouse, or Anne Elliott was growing into beauty and interest. I have no doubt that I, and my sisters and cousins, in our visits to Chawton, frequently disturbed this mystic process, without having any idea of the mischief that we were doing ; certainly we never should have guessed it by any signs of impatience or irritability in the writer.

REV. J. E. AUSTEN-LEIGH : 'A Memoir of Jane Austen.'

When I was young, it was not thought proper for young ladies to study very conspicuously ; and especially with pen in hand. Young ladies (at least in provincial towns) were expected to sit down in the parlor to sew—during which reading aloud was permitted—or to practise their music ; but so as to be fit to receive callers, without any signs of blue-stockings which could be reported abroad. Jane Austen herself, the queen of novelists, the immortal creator of Anne Elliott, Mr. Knightley, and a score or two more of unrivalled intimate friends of the whole public, was compelled by the feelings of her family to cover up her manuscripts with a large piece of muslin work, kept on the table for the purpose, whenever any genteel people came in.

HARRIET MARTINEAU : 'Autobiography.' Boston : Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1877.

I want to tell you that I have got my own darling child ['Pride and Prejudice'] from London. . . Miss

Affection for her own characters. B. dined with us on the very day of the book's coming, and in the evening we

fairly set at it, and read half the first volume to her, prefacing that, having intelligence from Henry that such a work would soon appear, we had desired him to send it whenever it came out, and I believe it passed with her unsuspected. She was amused, poor soul! *That* she could not help, you know, with two such people to lead the way, but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth. I must confess that I think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least I do not know.

JANE AUSTEN: *Letter to her sister Cassandra*, quoted in 'Memoir,' by Austen-Leigh.

She certainly took a kind of parental interest in the beings whom she had created, and did not dismiss them from her thoughts when she had

Individuality of her characters. finished her last chapter. When sending a copy of 'Emma' to a friend whose

daughter had been lately born, she wrote thus:—"I trust you will be as glad to see my 'Emma,' as I shall be to see your Jemima." She was very fond of 'Emma,' but did not reckon on her being a general favorite; for, when commencing that work, she said: "I am going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like." She would, if asked, tell us many little particulars about the subsequent career of some of her people.

She did not copy individuals, but she invested her own creations with individuality of character. Her relations never recognized any individual in her characters ; and I can call to mind several of her acquaintances whose peculiarities were very tempting and easy to be caricatured, of whom there are no traces in her pages. She, herself, when questioned on the subject by a friend, expressed a dread of what she called such an "invasion of social proprieties." She said that she thought it quite fair to note peculiarities and weaknesses, but that it was her desire to create, not to reproduce ; "besides," she added, "I am too proud of my gentlemen to admit that they were only Mr. A or Colonel B."

REV. J. E. AUSTEN-LEIGH : 'A Memoir of Jane Austen.'

Henry [her brother], and I went to the exhibition in Spring Gardens. It is not thought a good collection, but I was very well pleased, particularly with a small portrait of Mrs. ^{Hunting for portraits.} Bingley, excessively like her.

I went in hopes of seeing one of her sister, but there was no Mrs. Darcy. Perhaps, however, I may find her in the great exhibition, which we shall go to if we have time.

Mrs. Bingley's is exactly herself—size, shaped face, features, and sweetness ; there never was a greater likeness. She is dressed in a white gown, with green ornaments, which convinces me of what I have always supposed, that green was a favorite color with her. I dare say Mrs. D. will be in yellow.

Monday evening. We have been both to the exhibi-

tion and Sir J. Reynolds's and I am disappointed, for there was nothing like Mrs. D. at either. I can only imagine that Mr. D. prizes any picture of her too much to like it should be exposed to the public eye. I can imagine that he would have that sort of feeling—that mixture of love, pride and delicacy.

JANE AUSTEN: *Letter to her sister Cassandra*, 1813, in 'Letters of Jane Austen.'

I could no more write a romance than an epic poem. I could not sit seriously down to write a serious romance under any other motive than to ^{Understood her limitations.} save my life; and if it was indispensable for me to keep it up and never relax into laughing at myself or at other people, I am sure I should be hung before I had finished the first chapter. No, I must keep to my own style and go on in my own way; and though I may never succeed again in that, I am convinced that I should totally fail in any other.

JANE AUSTEN: *Letter to Mr. J. S. Clarke*, quoted in 'Memoir,' by Austen-Leigh.

By the bye, my dear E., I am quite concerned for the loss your mother mentions in her letter. Two chapters and a half to be missing is ^{Her comparison for her work.} monstrous! It is well that *I* have not been at Steventon lately, and therefore cannot be suspected of purloining them; two strong twigs and a half towards a nest of my own would have been something. I do not think, however, that any theft of that sort would be really very useful to me. What should I do with your strong, manly,

vigorous sketches, full of variety and glow? How could I possibly join them on to the little bit (two inches wide) of ivory on which I work with so fine a brush, as produces little effect after much labor?

JANE AUSTEN: *Letter to her Nephew*, quoted in 'Memoir,' by Austen-Leigh.

Read 'Emma,'—most admirable. The little complexities of the story are beyond my comprehension, and wonderfully beautiful. . . . She A "glorious novelist."
was a glorious novelist.

HARRIET MARTINEAU: *Journal*, in 'Memorials,' by Maria Weston Chapman. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1877.

I have read eleven times Miss Austen's 'Persuasion,' unequalled in interest, charm, and truth, 'Persuasion.'
to my mind.

HARRIET MARTINEAU: *Letter*, published in her biography, by Mrs. Fenwick Miller. (Famous Women Series.) Boston: Roberts Bros., 1885.

Her exquisite story of 'Persuasion' absolutely haunted me. Whenever it rained (and it did rain every day that I stayed in Bath, except one), I thought of Anne Elliott meeting Captain Wentworth, when driven by a shower to take refuge in a shoe-shop. Whenever I got out of breath in climbing up-hill, I thought of that same charming Anne Elliott, and of that ascent from the lower town to the upper, during which all her tribulations ceased. And when at last, by dint of trotting up one street and down another, I incurred the unromantic calamity of a blister on the

heel, even that grievance became classical by the recollection of the similar catastrophe which, in consequence of her peregrinations with the admiral, had befallen dear Mrs. Croft. I doubt if any one, even Scott himself, have left such perfect impressions of character and place as Jane Austen.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : 'Recollections of a Literary Life.' New York : Harper & Bros., 1852.

She wants nothing but the *beau-ideal* of the female character to be a perfect novel writer. . . . By the way, how delightful is her 'Emma' !
One thing the best, I think, of all her charming
lacking. works.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letters*, in her 'Life,' by Rev. A. G. L'Estrange.

The delicate mirth, the gently hinted satire, the feminine, decorous humor of Jane Austen, who, if not the greatest, is surely the most faultless
Three of female novelists. . . . My Uncle
weighty
opinions. Southey and my father had an equally high opinion of her merits, but Mr. Wordsworth used to say that though he admitted that her novels were an admirable copy of life, he could not be interested in productions of that kind ; unless the truth of nature were presented to him clarified, as it were, by the pervading light of imagination, it had scarce any attractions in his eyes.

SARA COLERIDGE : 'Memoir and Letters,' edited by her daughter. New York : Harper & Bros., 1874.

Shakespeare has had neither equal nor second. But among the writers who, in the point which we have noticed, [the difficult art of portraying characters in which no single feature is extravagantly overcharged,] have approached nearest to the manner of the great master, we have no hesitation in placing Jane Austen, a woman of whom England is justly proud. She has given us a multitude of characters, all, in a certain sense, commonplace, all such as we meet every day. Yet they are all as perfectly discriminated from each other as if they were the most eccentric of human beings. There are, for example, four clergymen, none of whom we should be surprised to find in any parsonage in the kingdom, Mr. Edward Ferrars, Mr. Henry Tilney, Mr. Edmund Bertram, and Mr. Elton. They are all specimens of the upper part of the middle class. They have all been liberally educated. They all lie under the restraints of the same sacred profession. They are all young. They are all in love. Not one of them has any hobby-horse, to use the phrase of Sterne. Not one has a ruling passion, such as we read of in Pope. Who would not have expected them to be insipid likenesses of each other? No such thing. Harpagon is not more unlike to Jourdain, Joseph Surface is not more unlike to Sir Lucius O'Trigger, than every one of Miss Austen's young divines to all his reverend brethren. And almost all this is done by touches so delicate, that they elude analysis, that they defy the powers of description, and that we know them to exist only by the general effect to which they have contributed.

LORD MACAULAY: *Essay on Madame D'Arblay*,

Edinburgh Review, January, 1843. 'Critical and Historical Essays.' New York : Albert Mason, 1875.

Read again, and for the third time at least, Miss Austen's very finely written novel of 'Pride and Prejudice.' That young lady had a talent for "The exquisite touch." describing the involvements, and feelings, and characters, of ordinary life, which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The Big Bow-Wow strain I can do myself like any now going ; but the exquisite touch, which renders ordinary commonplace things and characters interesting from the truth of the description and the sentiment, is denied to me. What a pity such a gifted creature died so early !

SIR WALTER SCOTT : *Diary*, March, 1826, in 'Memoirs,' by J. G. Lockhart. Edinburgh : Adam & Charles Black, 1871.

A pleasant anecdote, told to us on good authority in England, is illustrative of Miss Austen's power over various minds. A party of distinguished literary men met at a country-seat ; among them was Macaulay, and we believe, Hallam ; at all events, they were men of high reputation. While discussing the merits of various authors, it was proposed that each should write down the name of that work of fiction which had given him the greatest pleasure. Much surprise and amusement followed ; for, on opening the slips of paper, seven bore the name of 'Mansfield Park.'

MRS. R. C. WATERSTON : 'Jane Austen,' in the *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1863.

We would say that Fielding and Miss Austen are the greatest novelists in our language. . . . Miss Austen has been called a prose Shakespeare,—and among others, by Macaulay. In spite of the sense of incongruity which besets us in the words *prose* Shakespeare, we confess the greatness of Miss Austen, her marvellous dramatic power, seems, more than anything in Scott, akin to Shakespeare.

“A prose
Shakespeare.”

G. H. LEWES: ‘Recent Novels,’ in *Fraser’s Magazine*, December, 1847.

Why do you like Miss Austen so very much? I am puzzled on that point. What induced you to say that you would rather have written ‘Pride and Prejudice,’ or ‘Tom Jones,’ than any of the Waverley Novels? I had not seen ‘Pride and Prejudice’ till I read that sentence of yours—and then I got the book. And what did I find? An accurate daguerreotyped portrait of a commonplace face; a carefully fenced, high-cultivated garden, with neat borders and delicate flowers; but no glance of a bright, vivid physiognomy, no open country, no fresh air, no blue hill, no bonny beck. I should hardly like to live with her ladies and gentlemen, in their elegant but confined houses. . . . George Sand is sagacious and profound; Miss Austen is only shrewd and observant. . . . You say I must familiarize my mind with the fact that “Miss Austen is not a poetess, has no ‘sentiment,’ no eloquence, none of the ravishing enthusiasm of poetry,”—and then you add, I *must* learn to acknowledge her as *one of the greatest artists, of the greatest painters of human charac-*

Only shrewd
and observant.

ter, and one of the writers with the nicest sense of means to an end that ever lived. The last point only will I ever acknowledge. Can there be a great artist without poetry ?

CHARLOTTE BRONTE : *Letter to G. H. Lewes*, 1848, in the former's 'Life,' by E. C. Gaskell. New York : D. Appleton & Co., 1858.

It was in this year, I think (1865), that Mrs. Cameron wrote an undated letter in which mention is made of Tennyson :

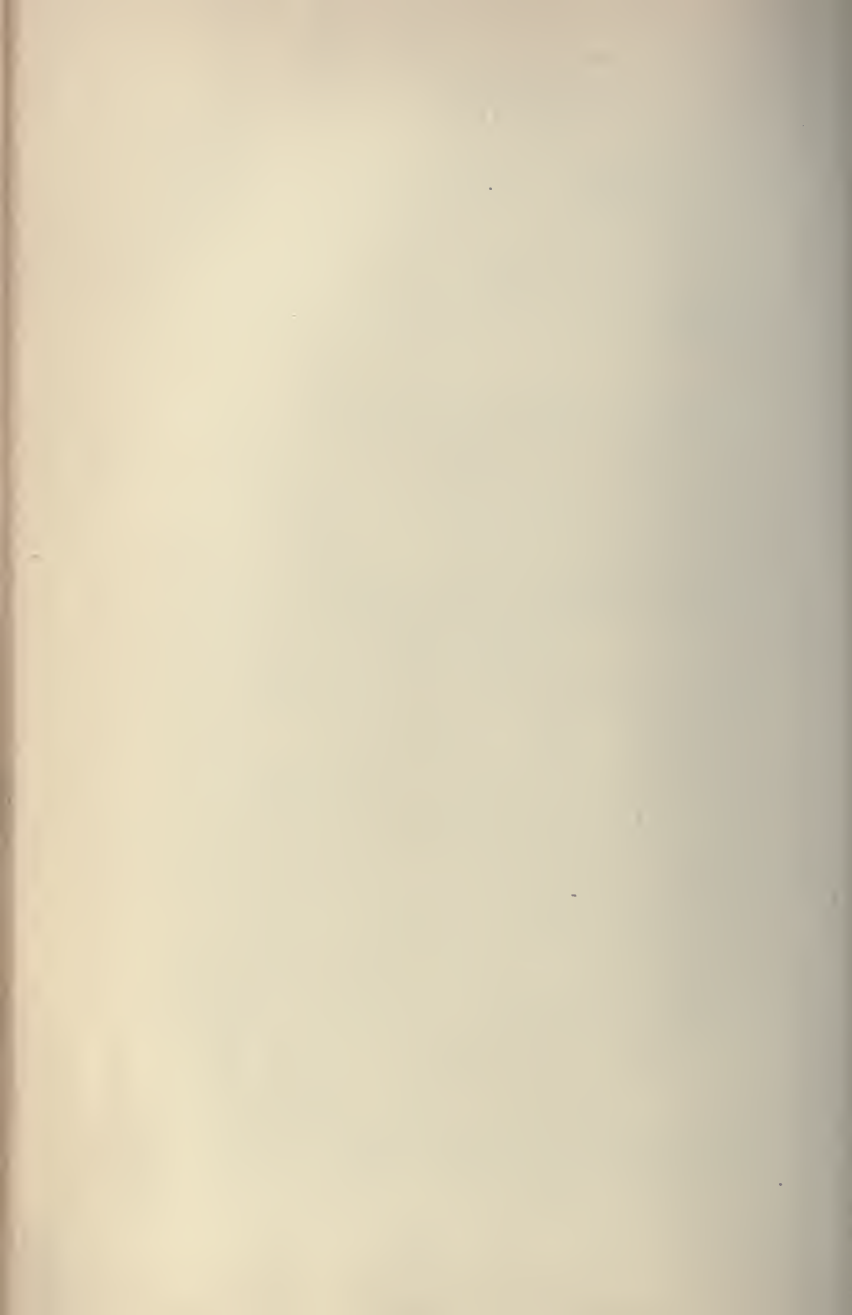
" Alfred talked very pleasantly that evening to Annie Thackeray and L—— S——. He spoke of Jane **Tennyson's** Austen, as James Spedding does, as next to **opinion.** Shakespeare ! I can never imagine what they mean when they say such things. . . . He said he believed every crime and every vice in the world were connected with the passion for autographs and anecdotes and records—that the desiring anecdotes and acquaintance with the lives of great men was treating them like pigs to be ripped open for the public ; that he knew he himself should be ripped open like a pig ; that he thanked God Almighty with his whole heart and soul that he knew nothing, and that the world knew nothing, of Shakespeare but his writings ; and that he thanked God Almighty that he knew nothing of Jane Austen, and that there were no letters preserved either of Shakespeare's or of Jane Austen's." *

HENRY TAYLOR : 'Autobiography.' London : Longmans, Green & Co., 1885.

* This was several years before the publication of the "Austen-Leigh Memoir."

JOANNA BAILLIE.

1762—1851.



JOANNA BAILLIE.

Joanna Baillie, the daughter of a Scotch clergyman, was born at Bothwell, in Lanarkshire, in 1762. When she was about six years old, her father exchanged the Bothwell Kirk for that of Hamilton. At ten she was sent to boarding-school in Glasgow ; and, her father having been appointed to a professorship in Glasgow University, when Joanna was fifteen the family removed to that city. Two years later her father died, and the Baillies left Glasgow for Long Calderwood, in the Middle Ward of Lanarkshire. In 1784, Joanna's brother, Dr. Matthew Baillie, took his mother and sisters to live in London. In 1790, Joanna published anonymously a volume of miscellaneous poems ; and in 1798, also anonymously, the first volume of *Plays on the Passions*. In 1802, a second, and in 1812, a third volume appeared. Meanwhile Miss Baillie had published, in 1804, a volume of *Miscellaneous Dramas* ; and in 1810 a tragedy, *The Family Legend*, was brought out at the Edinburgh Theatre. It was played fourteen nights ; and in 1814 was again acted in London. In 1826 appeared *The Martyr*, a tragedy, and in 1836 three more volumes of plays. In 1831 Miss Baillie published *A View of the General Tenor of the New Testament regarding the Nature and Dignity of Jesus Christ*. She was also the author of *Metrical Legends of Exalted Characters*.

In 1801, Joanna, her mother, and her sister, Agnes, had established themselves at Hampstead, where Mrs. Baillie had died in 1806. The sisters more than once revisited Scotland. Joanna "passed away without suffering" on the 23rd of February, 1851.

Her firm adherence to a mistaken theory of dramatic writing—the subordination of all else to the development of a master passion—has prevented her plays from holding the stage. Her finely humorous Scotch songs are perfection in their way. Many of them were suggested by earlier songs, and written to the old airs ; and the manner in which she has dealt with this rude material is an indication of those characteristics which led Lucy Aikin to speak of the "innocent and maiden grace" which "still hovered over her to the end." Every contemporary mentions Joanna Baillie with respect, and with affectionate admiration of her graceful old age.

Both father and mother were rarely high-principled ; and, in spite of his warm affections and her latent faculties of humor and pathos, they were alike **Parentage.** strongly tinged with the strict, somewhat stern, reserve of the old Scotch character. Agnes Baillie (Joanna's sister) told Lucy Aikin that, though her father had sucked the poison from a bite which she had received from a dog believed to be mad, he had never kissed her in his life. Joanna herself spoke to the same friend of her unsatisfied yearning for caresses when a child, and of her mother's simply chiding her when she ventured to clasp that mother's

knee ; " but," Joanna added, with perfect comprehension, " I know she liked it."

The village of Bothwell, where Dr. James Baillie's kirk and manse were situated, possessed many advantages. It was where " Clyde's banks are bonnie," in the fruit lands of the Middle Native place.

Ward of Lanarkshire, and where there is a strath of waving verdure at all seasons. In May and June it is one great white and pink flush of orchard blossoms. In August and September boughs bend richly under purple plums, scarlet streaked apples, and mottled olive and russet pears. Close by are the fragments of the great castle-keep of the Douglasses, one of the most stately ruins of Scotland. . . . Other legends, besides those of well-authenticated history, lurked in each drearier spot of that country. Vague tales of the foul fiend himself started up in the desolation of a peat bog, or the horror of a gruesome cavern. There were legends of gray " bogles " and sheeted ghosts. . . . These were the common chronicles and fireside lore of the country people of the day. As a stirring, inquisitive child, Joanna Baillie had a good source from which she could derive such knowledge, and form a familiar acquaintance betimes with many-sided humanity. The kitchen of the country manse was then the free resort and resting-place of privileged beggars, old soldiers and sailors, and humble travellers of every description. The settle in the chimney, and the " bink " in the " hallan," were rarely empty, as backwards and forwards trotted the little maid herself, making believe to dispense the doles of bannocks and cheese, and the cogs of brose and kale. All the while she was gather-

ing scraps of racy conversation into wide-open little pitchers of ears, and photographing still more accurately with clear fresh mirrors of eyes the quaintly-expressive faces and figures.

She was not more than six years old when her father exchanged the kirk of Bothwell for that of Hamilton, likewise in the fruit lands. But Hamilton was a town of

“Miss Jack.” six thousand inhabitants, clustering round the ducal palace and park of the Hamiltons. Here Joanna found herself one of a community which numbered scores of young people of her own age and degree. So well did she like it, that she was the leader in every romping game and frolic—an adept at out-of-door sports, whether swinging, skipping or climbing. She was celebrated for the fearlessness with which she ran along the parapets of bridges and on the tops of walls, and scampered heedlessly on any pony she could find. She had the misfortune to cause the fracture of her brother’s arm by inducing him to ride double with her. The horse, not approving of a pair of riders, threw the one who had the worse seat. “Look at Miss Jack!” a farmer once commented, . . . “she sits her horse as if it was a bit of herself.”

In advanced life she loved to dwell on her early unchecked rambles over heaths compared to which Hampstead was a common ; on her endless “paidling” in innumerable burns, tributaries of the Clyde. She was wont to regret wistfully that she could no longer “pad” barefooted on the grass or “plowter” in the water. And she would eagerly recommend to dainty and horrified English matrons the entire wholesome-

ness and happiness of letting their petted children run bare-footed in summer.

Whatever more valuable acquisitions Joanna made in these young days she was singularly deficient in learning, as the term is generally understood. "At nine I could not read plainly," Joanna Baillie told Lucy Aikin. "At nine, **Education.** Joanna?" her sister Agnes called her back. "You could not read well at eleven." . . . The worthy minister took the stout little ignoramus in hand along with his breakfast. She spoilt the flavor of his trout and cake and black pudding by crying throughout each lesson. It was thought that a change was called for in order to conquer Joanna's repugnance to sedentary studies, and her passion for open-air pursuits and boyish pranks. At ten years of age she was accordingly sent, along with her elder sister, to Miss Macdonald's boarding-school, in the heart of the city of Glasgow. . . . Joanna learned to read perfectly at the Glasgow boarding-school, as doubtless she also learned more or less serviceable writing and arithmetic, and correct or incorrect notions in geography and history. If she did not learn much else beyond singing a little to the guitar, and making a few promising attempts at drawing and dancing, still the school did its part. The study for which she showed a particular inclination was mathematics—a fact which is characteristic of the clear-headed girl. Of her own free will and entirely unassisted, she mastered a considerable portion of Euclid.

Pricked on by the demands of a large girl-audience at school, Joanna's hereditary gift of story-telling, by

which she could excite laughter or tears, grew and grew until at length she found herself the chief figure in something like private theatricals. In connection with these chamber-dramas, Joanna was play-writer, playwright, player, stage-dresser, and scene-shifter in one. In this foreshadowing of her future career, she is said to have strongly displayed an eye for effect, which failed her in her great efforts of later life. . . . Let us conjure up, if we can, the old Glasgow boarding-school, with its small rooms and dim tallow candles. There stand the host of eager girls in their short-waisted, short-sleeved gowns and mittens, absorbed in the common levy of buckles, brooches, necklaces, plaids, scarfs, breast-knots, and Highland bonnets. The acknowledged mistress of the ceremonies and games, and the "first lady" of the troop, is the undersized girl with marked features and gray eyes. . . . Down on the scene Miss Macdonald and her governess look for a moment, from the elevation of their huge toupees and barricades of ruffles. They dismiss authoritatively the excited rabble, and retire to their cosy supper where they admit in confidence to each other the mother-wit of Miss Jack Baillie, who has yet got a bad memory for facts of consequence outside of her "fule" stories, and her "droll swatches" of this man and that woman.

Joanna appeared to her companions a capable young woman with much decision of character, like her mother.

Joanna at 21. She was shy amongst strangers, but sufficiently frank to her friends; and in the midst of her seriousness, she was the merriest

soul when the fit took her. She had quietly written some clever Scotch songs, most of them adaptations from old ditties. These were already sung with glee around many a rustic hearth and at many a homely supper table. . . . Joanna was not handsome. She was below the middle height, and had the large, statuesque features which suit better with

a stately figure. Years lent these features **Appearance.**

dignity rather than robbed them of grace. There is no word of her youthful bloom. She wore her hair for many years simply divided and braided across her forehead; but the hair must have grown low on it from the first, and, whether in a crop, or in braids, must have nearly concealed the expansive brow, which thus lent no relief to the dark gauntness of the face. The brows were firmly arched. Her mouth was wide, and expressed benevolence. Her chin was clearly moulded, and slightly projecting. She

was the most sensible of wilful geni- **Character.**
uses; the most retiring of "wise" women; the most maidenly of experienced elderly ladies; the most tenderly attached of daughters and sisters; one of the meekest and most modest of Christians.

Joanna Baillie's was a noble soul. She had a great man's grand guilelessness, rather than a woman's minute and subtle powers of sympathy; a man's shy but unstinted kindness and forbearance, rather than a woman's eager but measured cordiality and softness; a man's modesty in full combination with a woman's delicacy; and, as if to prove her sex beyond mistake, she had after all more than the usual share of a woman's

pugnacity and headstrongness, when the fit was upon her.

SARAH TYTLER and J. L. WATSON : 'Songstresses of Scotland.' London : Strahan & Co., 1871.

Mrs. Barbauld mentions Miss Baillie in her letter to Mrs. Kenrick, and tells her how much amazed she was **An innocent face.** at finding the author [of 'Plays on the Passions'] was not one of the already celebrated writers to whom it had been attributed, but "a young lady of Hampstead whom she visited, and who came to Mr. Barbauld's meeting all the while with as innocent a face as if she had never written a line."

GRACE A. ELLIS (OLIVER) : 'Memoir of Mrs. Barbauld.' Boston : J. R. Osgood & Co., 1874.

I was taken by Dr. and Mrs. Baillie to Hampstead to see the gifted Joanna. I found her on a Sunday morning reading the Bible to her mother, **A Sunday morning in 1801.** a very aged lady, who was quite blind. Joanna's manners and accent were very Scottish, very kind, simple, and unaffected, but less frank than those of her elder sister. She seemed almost studious to avoid literary conversation, but spoke with much interest of old Scotch friends, and of her early days in Scotland.

MRS. FLETCHER : 'Autobiography.' Boston : Roberts Bros., 1876.

The first new play produced by Henry Siddons [at the Edinburgh Theatre] was the 'Family Legend' of Joanna Baillie. This was, I believe, the first of her

dramas that ever underwent the test of representation in her native kingdom ; and Scott appears to have exerted himself most indefatigably in its behalf. He was consulted about all the *minutiæ* of costume, attended every rehearsal, and supplied the prologue. The play was better received than any other which the gifted authoress has since subjected to the same experiment ; and how ardently Scott enjoyed its success will appear from a few specimens of the many letters which he addressed to his friend on the occasion.

The first of these letters is dated Edinburgh, October 27, 1809 :

“ On receiving your long kind letter yesterday, I sought out Siddons, who was equally surprised and delighted at your liberal arrangement about the ‘Lady of the Rock.’ I will put all the names to rights, and retain enough of locality and personality to please the antiquary, without the least risk of bringing the clan Gillian about our ears. I went through the theatre, which is the most complete little thing of the kind I ever saw, elegantly fitted up, and large enough for every purpose. . . . With regard to the equipment of the ‘Family Legend,’ I have been much diverted at a discovery which I have made. I had occasion to visit our Lord Provost (by profession a stocking-weaver), and was surprised to find the worthy magistrate filled with a new-born zeal for the drama. He spoke of Mr. Siddons’ merits with enthusiasm, and of Miss Baillie’s powers almost with tears of rapture. Being a curious investigator of cause and effect, I never rested until I found out that this theatric rage

which had seized his lordship of a sudden, was owing to a large order for hose, pantaloons, and plaids for equipping the rival clans of Campbell and Maclean, and which Siddons was sensible enough to send to the warehouse of our excellent provost."

Three months later he thus communicates the result of the experiment :

" You have only to imagine all that you could wish to give success to a play, and your conceptions will

still fall short of the complete and decided triumph of the 'Family Legend.' **Scott's account of its success.**

The house was crowded to a most extraordinary degree ; many people had come from your native capital of the west ; everything that pretended to distinction, whether from rank or literature, was in the boxes, and in the pit such an aggregate mass of humanity as I have seldom, if ever, witnessed in the same space. . . . I sat the whole time shaking for fear a scene-shifter, or a carpenter, or some of the subaltern actors, should make some blunder and interrupt the feeling of deep and general interest. The scene on the rock struck the utmost possible effect into the audience, and you heard nothing but sobs on all sides. The banquet-scene was equally impressive, and so was the combat. Of the greater scenes, that between Lorn and Helen in the castle of Maclean, that between Helen and her lover, and the examination of Maclean himself in Argyle's castle, were applauded to the very echo. Siddons announced the play 'for the rest of the week,' which was received not only with a thunder of applause, but with cheering and throwing up of hats and handkerchiefs. Mrs. Siddons supported her part

incomparably. . . . The scenery was very good, and the rock, without the appearance of pantomime, was so contrived as to place Mrs. Siddons in a very precarious situation to all appearance. The dresses were more tawdry than I should have judged proper, but expensive and showy. I got my brother John's Highland recruiting party to reinforce the garrison of Inverary, and as they mustered beneath the porch of the castle, and seemed to fill the courtyard behind, the combat scene had really the appearance of reality. . . . My kind respects attend Miss Agnes Baillie, and believe me ever your obliged and faithful servant,

WALTER SCOTT."

J. G. LOCKHART : 'The Life of Sir Walter Scott.'
Edinburgh : Adam & Charles Black, 1871.

It is too little to say that I am enchanted with the third volume [of 'Plays on the Passions'], especially with the two first plays, which in every point not only sustain, but even exalt ^{Opinion, of} 'Orra,' your reputation as a dramatist. [Miss Baillie had written him that this was to be her last publication, and that she was "getting her knitting-needles in order" — meaning to begin her new course of industry by making him a purse.] The whole character of 'Orra' is exquisitely supported as well as imagined, and the language distinguished by a rich variety of fancy, which I know no instance of excepting in Shakespeare. After I had read 'Orra' twice to myself, Terry [the comedian, Scott's warm friend and admirer] read it over to us a third time, aloud, and I have seldom seen a little circle so much affected as during the whole fifth act. I think it would act charm-

ingly. . . . Yet I have a great quarrel with this beautiful drama, for you must know that you have utterly destroyed a song of mine, precisely in the turn of your outlaw's ditty, and sung by persons in somewhat the same situation. . . I took out my unfortunate manuscript to look at it, but alas ! it was the encounter of the iron and the earthen pitchers in the fable. I was clearly sunk, and the potsherds not worth gathering up. But only conceive that the chorus should have run thus *verbatim*——

“ 'Tis mirk midnight with peaceful men,
With us 'tis dawn of day ”——

and again——

“ Then boot and saddle, comrades boon,
Nor wait the dawn of day.”

[Note by Lockhart : These lines were accordingly struck out of the outlaw's song in 'Rokeby.' The verses of 'Orra,' to which Scott alludes, are no doubt the following :

“ The wild fire dances on the fen,
The red star sheds its ray,
Up rouse ye then, my merry men,
It is our opening day.”]

To return, I really think 'Fear' the most dramatic passion you have hitherto touched, because capable of being drawn to the most extreme paroxysm on the stage. In 'Orra' you have all gradations, from a timidity excited by a strong and irritable imagination, to the extremity which altogether unhinges the understanding.

SIR WALTER SCOTT : *Letter to Joanna Baillie*, in the former's 'Life,' by J. G. Lockhart.

She is small in figure, and her gait is mean and shuffling, but her manners are those of a well-bred woman. She has none of the unpleasant airs too common to literary ladies. Her conversation is sensible. She possesses apparently considerable information, is prompt without being forward, and has a fixed judgment of her own, without any disposition to force it on others. Wordsworth said of her with warmth: "If I had to present any one to a foreigner as a model of an English gentlewoman, it would be Joanna Baillie."

Joanna's
personal ap-
pearance.

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON: *Diary*, 1812, in 'Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence.' Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co., 1871.

I remember her as singularly impressive in look and manner, with the "queenly" air we associate with ideas of high birth and lofty rank. Her face was long, narrow, dark, and solemn, and her speech deliberate and considerate, the very antipodes of "chatter." Tall in person,* and habited according to the mode of an olden time, her picture, as it is now present to me, is that of a very venerable dame, dressed in coif and kirtle, stepping out, as it were, from a frame in which she had been placed by the painter Vandyke.

Several
years later.

S. C. HALL: 'A Book of Memories of Great Men and Women of the Age.' London: Virtue & Co., 1871.

She was past fifty when I first saw her, and appeared like an old lady to me, then in my teens. She dressed

*Mr. Hall's testimony on this point differs from that of all others who have described Miss Baillie

like an aged person, and with scrupulous neatness. She lived with a sister who looked older still, because she had not the vivacity of Joanna, and was only distinguished for the amiability with which she bore being outshone by her more gifted relative.

Miss Baillie, according to the English custom, took the title of Mrs. Joanna Baillie, on passing her fiftieth birthday. She gave the prettiest and the "Mrs." Baillie. pleasantest dinners, and presided at them with peculiar grace and tact, always attentive to the wants of her guests, and yet keeping up a lively conversation the while. She took such pleasure in writing poetry, and especially in her 'Plays on the Passions,' that she said, "If no one ever read them, I should find my happiness in writing them."

Though she was young when she left her native land, she never lost her Scotch accent. I thought it made her conversation only the more piquant. She was full of anecdotes and curious facts about remarkable people. I only recollect her telling one of Lord Byron being obliged, by politeness, to escort her and her sister to the opera, and her perceiving that he was provoked beyond measure at being there with them, and that he made faces as he sat behind them.

ELIZA FARRAR : 'Recollections of Seventy Years.'
Boston : Ticknor and Fields, 1866.

Of Joanna Baillie I saw much both as a friend and patient. Her gentle simplicity, with a Scotch tinge coloring it to the end of life, won the Old age. admiration even of those who knew nothing of her power of dramatic poetry. It was pleasant to visit her in the quiet house at Hampstead, in which

she lived with her sister Agnes. She reached, I think, her ninety-second year.* Agnes lived to a hundred.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: 'Recollections of Past Life.' New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1872.

Our great poetess, or rather the sensible, amiable old lady that *was* a great poetess thirty years ago, is still in full preservation as to health. "Dry and Never did the flame of genius more Scotch^y," thoroughly expire than in her case. . . . She is, as Mr. Wordsworth observes, when quoting her non-feeling for Lycidas, "dry and Scotch^y"; learning she never possessed, and some of her poetry, which I think was far above that of any other woman, is the worse for a few specks of bad English; then her criticisms are so surprisingly narrow and jejune, and show so slight an acquaintance with fine literature in general.

Yet if the authoress of 'Plays on the Passions' does not now write or talk like a poetess, she *looks* like one, and *is* a piece of poetry in herself. Never ^{A gracious} was old age more lovely and interesting; ^{winter.} the face, the dress, the quiet, subdued motions, the silver hair, the calm *in-looking* eye, the pale, yet not unhealthy skin, all are in harmony; this is winter with its own peculiar loveliness of snows and paler sunshine.

SARA COLERIDGE: *Letter to Miss E. Trevenen*, 1833, in the former's 'Memoir and Letters,' edited by her daughter. New York: Harper & Bros., 1874.

She had enjoyed a fame almost without parallel, and

*An error. Miss Baillie died at eighty-nine,

had outlived it. She had been told every day for years, through every possible channel, **Meeting with Harriet Martineau.** —if second; and then she had seen her works drop out of notice so that, of the generation who grew up before her eyes, not one in a thousand had read a line of her plays—yet was her serenity never disturbed, nor her merry humor in the least dimmed. I have never lost the impression of the trying circumstances of my first interview with her, nor of the grace, simplicity and sweetness with which she bore them. She was old; and she declined dinner-parties; but she wished to meet me, . . . and therefore she came to Miss Berry's to tea, one day when I was dining there. Miss Berry, her contemporary, put her feelings, it seemed to me, to a most unwarrantable trial, by describing to me, as we three sat together, the celebrity of the 'Plays on the Passions' in their day. She told me how she found on her table, on her return from a ball, a volume of plays; and how she kneeled on a chair to look at it, and how she read on till the servant opened the shutters, and let in the daylight of a winter morning. She told me how all the world raved about the plays; and she held on so long that I was in pain for the noble creature to whom it must have been irksome on the one hand to hear her own praises and fame so dwelt upon, and, on the other, to feel that we all knew how long that had been quite over. But, when I looked up at her sweet face, with its composed smile amidst the becoming mob-cap, I saw that she was above pain of either kind.

HARRIET MARTINEAU: 'Autobiography.' Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1877.

We drove out, by appointment, to Mrs. Joanna Baillie's, at Hampstead, took our lunch with her, and passed the time at her house till four o'clock. We found her living in a ^{The home} at Hampstead. small and most comfortable, nice, un-pretending house, where she has dwelt for above thirty years. She is now above seventy, and, dressed with an exact and beautiful propriety, received us most gently and kindly. Her accent is still Scotch; her manner strongly marked with that peculiar modesty which you sometimes see united to the venerableness of age, and which is then so very winning; and her conversation, always quiet and never reminding you of her own claims as an author, is so full of good sense, with occasionally striking and decisive remarks, and occasionally a little touch of humor, that I do not know when I have been more pleased and gratified than I was by this visit.

She lives exactly as an English gentlewoman of her age and character should live, and everything about her was in good taste and appropriate to her position, even down to the delicious little table she had spread for us in her quiet parlor.

GEORGE TICKNOR : *Diary*, 1835, in 'Life, Letters, and Journals.' Boston : J. R. Osgood & Co., 1876.

A sweeter picture of old age was never seen. Her figure was small, light, and active; her countenance, in its expression of sincerity, harmonized ^{Serene old} wonderfully with her gay conversation age. and her cheerful voice. Her eyes were beautiful, dark, bright, and penetrating, with the full, innocent gaze of childhood. Her face was altogether

comely, and her dress did justice to it. She wore her own silvery hair and a mob-cap, with its delicate lace border fitting close round her face. She was well-dressed in handsome dark silks, and her lace caps and collars looked always new. No Quaker ever was neater, while she kept up with the times in her dress as in her habit of mind, as far as became her years. In her whole appearance there was always something for even the passing stranger to admire, and never anything for the most familiar friend to wish otherwise.

HARRIET MARTINEAU : Quoted in 'Songstresses of Scotland.'

She wore a delicate lavender satin bonnet ; and Mrs. J—— says she is fond of dress, and knows what every one has on. Her taste is certainly
Taste in
dress.
 exquisite in dress. I more than ever admired the harmony of expression and tint, the silver hair and silvery gray eye, the pale skin, and the look which speaks of a mind that has had much communing with high imagination, though such intercourse is only perceptible now by the absence of everything which that lofty spirit would not set his seal upon. . . . Age has slackened the active part of genius, and yet is in some sort a substitute for it. There is a declining of mental exertitation. She has had enough of that ; and now for a calm decline, and thoughts of Heaven.

SARA COLERIDGE : *Letter to her husband*, 1834, in 'Memoir and Letters,' edited by her daughter.

She talked of Scott with a tender enthusiasm that

was contagious, and of Lockhart with a kindness that is uncommon when coupled with his name, and which seemed only characteristic of her benevolence. It is very rare that old age, or, indeed, any age, is found so winning and agreeable. I do not wonder that Scott in his letters treats her with more deference, and writes to her with more care and beauty, than to any other of his correspondents.

GEORGE TICKNOR : *Diary*, 1838, in 'Life, Letters and Journals.'

Unlike Zaccheus the publican in every other respect, she followed his rule with respect to the earnings of her pen—half of her goods she gave to feed the poor. This arrangement was made and adhered to, when the Baillies' income, never a very large one, was at its minimum ; and it was not departed from when increased funds brought in their train increased expenditures and a host of additional wants.

SARAH TYTLER AND J. L. WATSON : 'Songstresses of Scotland.'

MARGUERITE, LADY BLESSINGTON.

1789—1849.

MARGUERITE, LADY BLESSINGTON.

Marguerite, Lady Blessington, flitted across the field of English literature like a blue butterfly, and left no trace behind. She claims a place among our literary women, not by virtue of her many works, which are now forgotten, but rather as an influence among literary men ; as the woman in whose sunny companionship Byron basked, and who had Landor and Procter to write her epitaphs.

She was born at Knockbrit, Tipperary, on the 1st of September, 1789. (The year, however, has been variously stated as 1787 and 1790.) She was the daughter of Edmund Power, a country gentleman and magistrate, a man of violent temper and without principle. In 1796 or '97 the Powers removed to Clonmel. In 1804, when she was under fifteen years of age, Marguerite was forced by her father into a marriage with the vicious and half-insane Captain Maurice Farmer. Within a year they agreed to separate. Mrs. Farmer is spoken of as residing in Cahir, Tipperary, in 1807, and in Dublin in 1809. And now occurs that hiatus in the account of her life which has never been satisfactorily filled, and the existence of which the English women of her day refused to overlook. In 1816 she was established in Manchester Square, London ; and in 1818, Captain Farmer having died the previous year, she married the Earl of Blessington.

Her fashionable life, foreign travels, and literary career now began. In 1823, while at Genoa with her husband, she made the acquaintance of Lord Byron. In 1829 Lord Blessington died in the Hotel Ney, Paris, which had been sumptuously fitted up as his residence. Lady Blessington returned to London in 1830. She lived in Seamore Place, May Fair, until 1836, when she removed to Gore House, Kensington Gore. The extravagant splendor of her style of living, and the charm of her evenings, have often been described. The £2,000 a year which Lord Blessington had left her, even with the addition of the income received from her writings, was not sufficient to meet the expenses which long habit had rendered almost necessary to her; and in the spring of 1849 "the long-menaced break-up of the establishment at Gore House took place." Lady Blessington left London, accompanied by her nieces, for Paris, where, on the 4th of June, 1849, she died very suddenly of "an apoplectic malady, complicated with disease of the heart." Count D'Orsay, her husband's son-in-law and her intimate friend, survived her but a few years, and was buried beside her at Chambourcy, where he had caused a huge monument to be erected to her memory.

The following are the works of Lady Blessington :

The Magic Lantern ; or, Sketches of Scenes in the Metropolis, 1822.

Sketches and Fragments, 1822.

Conversations with Lord Byron, 1832. These articles first appeared in Colburn's *New Monthly Magazine*.

Grace Cassidy ; or, the Repealers, 1833.

Meredyth, 1833.

The Follies of Fashion, 1835.

The Two Friends, 1835.

The Victims of Society, 1837.

The Confessions of an Elderly Lady, 1838.

The Governess, 1839.

Desultory Thoughts and Reflections, 1839.

The Idler in Italy, 1839.

The Idler in France, 1841.

The Lottery of Life, 1842.

Strathern ; or, Life at Home and Abroad, 1845.

The Memoirs of a Femme de Chambre, 1846.

Lionel Deerhurst, 1846.

Marmaduke Herbert, 1847.

Country Quarters. This was first published in a London Sunday paper, 1848. After Lady Blessington's death it was edited by her niece, Miss Power, and published separately.

She also wrote *A Tour Through the Netherlands to Paris*, *Confessions of an Elderly Gentleman*, *The Belle of a Season*, and edited for several years Heath's 'Book of Beauty,' 'The Keepsake,' and another annual entitled, 'Gems of Beauty.' Miss Power says in her memoir, "I believe that for some years she made, on an average, somewhere about a thousand a year ; some years a good deal above that sum." Jerdan states that he has known her to enjoy from her pen an amount between £2,000 and £3,000 per annum ; and adds that her title and her social tact had considerable influence in commanding high prices.

Lady Blessington's strange life may be said to have been written in three chapters : the first as dark and terrible as any in 'Wuthering Heights' ; the second

as gorgeous as any in the novels of D'Israeli ; and the last like a handful of leaves torn from 'Vanity Fair.'

Beauty, the heritage of the family, was, in her early youth, denied to Marguerite : her eldest brother and **Sickly child-** sister were singularly handsome and **hood.** healthy children, while she, pale, weakly, and ailing, was for years regarded as little likely ever to grow to womanhood ; the precocity of her intellect, the keenness of her perceptions, and her extreme sensitiveness, all of which are so often regarded, more especially among the Irish, as the precursive symptoms of an early death, confirmed this belief, and the poor, pale, reflective child was long looked upon as doomed to a premature grave.

The atmosphere in which she lived was but little congenial to such a nature. Her father, a man of violent temper, and little given to study the characters of his children, intimidated and shook the delicate nerves of the sickly child, though there were moments—rare ones, it is true—when the sparkles of her early genius for an instant dazzled and gratified him. Her mother, though she failed not to bestow the tenderest maternal care on the health of the little sufferer, was not capable of appreciating her fine and subtle qualities, and her brothers and sisters, fond as they were of her, were not, in their high health and boisterous gayety, companions suited to such a child.

At a very early age, the powers of her imagination had already begun to develop themselves. She would entertain her brothers and sisters for hours with tales

invented as she proceeded ; and at last, so remarkable did this talent become, that her parents, astonished at the interest and coherence of her narrations, constantly called upon her to *improviser* for the entertainment of their friends and neighbors, a task always easy to her fertile brain ; and, in a short time, the little neglected child became the wonder of the neighborhood.

MISS POWER: 'A Memoir of Lady Blessington,' quoted by R. R. Madden in 'The Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington.' New York : Harper & Bros., 1855.

Her father was in a ruined position at the time Lady Blessington was brought home from school, a mere child, and treated as such. Among his military friends, she then saw a Captain Farmer for the first time ; he appeared on very intimate terms with her father, but when she first met him, her father did not introduce her to him ; in fact, she was looked upon then as a mere school-girl, whom it was not necessary to introduce to any stranger. In a day or two her father told her she was not to return to school ; he had decided that she was to marry Captain Farmer. This intelligence astonished her ; she burst out crying, and a scene ensued in which his menaces and her protestations against his determination terminated violently. Her mother unfortunately sided with her father, and eventually, by caressing entreaties and representations of the advantages her father looked forward to from this match with a man of Captain Farmer's affluence, she was persuaded to sacrifice herself, and to marry a

Unfortunate
early
marriage.

man for whom she felt the utmost repugnance. She had not been long under her husband's roof before it became evident to her that her husband was subject to fits of insanity, and his own relatives informed her that her father had been acquainted by them that Captain Farmer had been insane ; but this information had been concealed from her by her father. She lived with him about three months, and during that time he frequently treated her with personal violence ; . . . he used to lock her up whenever he went abroad, and often has left her without food till she felt almost famished. He was ordered to join his regiment, which was encamped at the Curragh of Kildare. Lady Blessington refused to accompany him there, and was permitted to remove to her father's house, to remain there during his absence. Captain Farmer joined his regiment, and had not been many days with it, when, in a quarrel with his colonel, he drew his sword on the former, and the result of this insane act (for such it was allowed to be) was, that he was obliged to quit the service, being permitted to sell his commission. The friends of Captain Farmer now prevailed on him to go to India ; she, however, refused to go with him, and remained at her father's.

Such is the account given to me by Lady Blessington, and for the accuracy of the above report of it I can vouch.

R. R. MADDEN : 'Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington.'

I first saw Lady Blessington under circumstances sufficiently characteristic of her extraordinary personal

beauty at the period in question, to excuse my referring to them somewhat in detail. It was on the opening day of that Royal Academy Exhibition which contained Lawrence's celebrated portrait of Lady Blessington—one of the very finest he ever painted, and universally known by the numerous engravings that have since been made from it. In glancing hastily round the room on first entering, I had duly admired this exquisite portrait, as approaching very near to the perfection of the art, though (as I conceived) by no means reaching it, for there were points in the picture which struck me as inconsistent with others that were also present. Yet I could not, except as a vague theory, lay the apparent discrepancies at the door of the artist. . . .

Portrait by
Sir. T. Lawrence.

Presently, on returning to this portrait, I saw standing before it, as if on purpose to confirm my theory, the lovely original. She was leaning on the arm of her husband, Lord Blessington. And then I saw how impossible it is for an artist to flatter a really beautiful woman. . . . I have seen no other instance so striking, of the inferiority of art to nature when the latter reaches the ideal standard, as in this celebrated portrait of Lady Blessington. . . . As the original stood before it . . . she fairly "killed" the copy, and this no less in the individual details than in the general effect. Moreover, what I had believed to be errors and shortcomings in the picture were wholly absent in the original. There is about the former a consciousness, a "pretension," a leaning forward, and a looking forth, as if to claim or court notice and admiration, of which there was no touch in the latter.

I have never since beheld so pure and perfect a vision of female loveliness, in what I conceive to be its most perfect phase, that, namely, in which intellect does not predominate over form, feature, complexion, and the other physical attributes of female beauty, but only serves to heighten, purify and irradiate them ; and it is this class of beauty which cannot be equalled on canvas.

At this time Lady Blessington was about six-and-twenty* years of age ; but there was about her face together with that beaming intelligence which rarely shows itself upon the countenance till that period of life, a bloom and freshness which as rarely survives early youth, and a total absence of those undefinable marks which thought and feeling still more rarely fail to leave behind them. Unlike all other beautiful faces that I have seen, hers was, at the time of which I speak, neither a history nor a prophecy ; not a book to read and study, a problem to solve, or a mystery to speculate upon, but a star to kneel before and worship . . . an end and a consummation in itself.

P. G. PATMORE : 'My Friends and Acquaintance.'
London : Saunders & Otley, 1854.

From the period of her marriage with the Earl of Blessington, her intercourse with eminent men and distinguished persons of various pursuits
 Her beauty at twenty-eight may be said to date. . . . She was then twenty-eight years of age, in the perfection of natural beauty, that bright and radiant beauty which derives its power not so much

* She was over twenty-eight ; she seems always to have looked younger than she actually was.

from harmony of features and symmetry of form, as from the animating influences of intelligence beaming forth from a mind full of joyous and of kindly feelings and of brilliant fancies—that kind of vivid loveliness which is never found where some degree of genius is not. Her form was exquisitely moulded, with an inclination to fullness ; but no finer proportions could be imagined ; her movements were graceful and natural at all times.

The peculiar character of Lady Blessington's beauty seemed to be the entire, exact, and instantaneous correspondence of every feature, and each separate trait of her countenance, with the emotion of her mind, which any particular subject of conversation or object of attention might excite. The instant a joyous thought took possession of her fancy, you saw it transmitted as if by electrical agency to her glowing features ; you read it in her sparkling eyes, her laughing lips, her cheerful looks ; you heard it expressed in her ringing laugh, clear and sweet as the gay, joy-bell sounds of childhood's merriest tones.

There was a geniality in the warmth of her Irish feelings, an abandonment of all care, of all apparent consciousness of her powers of attraction, a glowing sunshine of good-humor ^{Geniality} and good ^{and good} humor. and of good-nature in the smiles and laughter, and the sallies of wit of this lovely woman in her early and happy days (those of her Italian life, especially from 1823 to 1826), such as have been seldom surpassed. . . . Her voice was ever sweetly modulated and low. Its tones were always in harmonious concord with the traits of her expressive features. There was a cordiality, a clear, silver-toned

hilarity, a correspondence in them, apparently with all her sensations, that made her hearers feel "she spoke to them with every part of her being." . . . All the beauty of Lady Blessington, without the exquisite sweetness of her voice, and the witchery of its tones in pleasing or expressing pleasure, would have been only a secondary consideration.

R. R. MADDEN : 'Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington.'

It is clear that the peculiar charm of Lady Blessington's manner exercised its usual spell—that the cold, scorning, and world-wearied spirit of **Friendship with Lord Byron.** Byron was, for the time being, "subdued to the quality" of the genial and happy one with which it held converse—and that both the poet and the man became once more what nature intended them to be.

Lady Blessington seems to have been the only woman holding his own rank and station with whom Byron was ever at his ease, and with whom, therefore, he was himself. With all others he seemed to feel a constraint which irritated and vexed him into the assumption of vices which did not belong to him.

P. G. PATMORE : 'My Friends and Acquaintance.'

His lordship suffered Lady Blessington to lecture him in prose, and, what was worse, in verse. He endeavored to persuade Lord Blessington **A Byronic jeu d'esprit.** to prolong his stay in Genoa, and to take a residence adjoining his own named "*Il Paradiso*." And on a rumor of his intention to take the place for himself, and some good-natured friend observing, "*Il*

diavolo è ancora entrato in Paradiso," his lordship wrote the following lines :

" Beneath Blessington's eyes
The reclaimed Paradise
Should be free as the former from evil ;
But if the new Eve
For an apple should grieve,
What mortal would not play the devil ?"

R. R. MADDEN : ' Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington.'

" The whole fitting up," says Lady Blessington, " is in exquisite taste ; and, as usual, when my most gallant of all gallant husbands that it ever fell to the happy lot of woman to possess interferes, no expense has been spared. The bed, which is silvered instead of gilt, rests on the backs of two large silver swans, so exquisitely sculptured that every feather is in *alto-relievo*, and looks as fleecy as those of the living birds. The recess in which it is placed is lined with white fluted silk, bordered with blue embossed lace ; and from the columns that support the frieze of the recess, pale blue silk curtains, lined with white, are hung, which, when drawn, conceal the recess altogether. . . . A silver sofa has been made, to fit the side of the room opposite the fire-place, near to which stands a most inviting *bergere*. An *escritoire* occupies one panel, a book-stand the other, and a rich coffer for jewels forms a pendant to a similar one for lace or India shawls. A carpet of uncut pile, of a pale blue, a silver lamp and a Psyche glass, the ornaments silvered to correspond with the decorations of the cham-

ber, complete the furniture. The hangings in the dressing-room are of blue silk, covered with lace, and trimmed with rich frills of the same material, as are also the dressing-stands and *chaire longue*, and the carpet and lamp are similar to those of the bedroom. A toilet-table stands before the window, and small *jardinieres* are placed in front of each panel of looking-glass, but so low as not to impede a full view of the person dressing in this beautiful little sanctuary. The *salle de bain* is draped with white muslin, trimmed with lace; and the sofa and the *bergere* are covered with the same. The bath is of marble, inserted in the floor, with which its surface is level. On the ceiling over it is a painting of Flora, scattering flowers with one hand, while from the other is suspended an alabaster lamp in the form of a lotus."

R. R. MADDEN: 'Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington.'

Her taste in everything was towards the gay, the superb, the luxurious; but, on the whole, excellently good. Her eye was as quick as light-

Her Ladyship's luxurious taste.

ning; her resources were many and original. It will not be forgotten how . . . she astounded the opera-goers by appearing in her box with a plain transparent cap, which the world in its ignorance called a Quaker's cap; and the best of all likenesses of her, in date later than the lovely Lawrence portrait, is that drawing by Chalon, in which this tire is represented, with some additional loops of ribbon. So, too, her houses in Seamore Place and at Kensington Gore were full of fancies which have since passed into fashions, and which

seemed all to belong to and to agree with herself. Had she been the selfish sybaritic woman whom many who hated her, without knowing her, delighted to represent her, she might have indulged these joys and costly humors with impunity ; but she was affectionately, inconsiderately liberal.

HENRY F. CHORLEY : ' Autobiography, Memoir, and Letters,' compiled by H. G. Hewlett. London : Richard Bentley & Son, 1873.

The following sketch was taken from the " Ring " in Hyde Park :

" Observe that green chariot just making the turn of the unbroken line of equipages. Though it is now advancing towards us with at least a dozen carriages between, it is to be distinguished from the throng by the elevation of its driver and footman above the ordinary level of the line. As it comes nearer, we can observe the particular points that give it that perfectly *distinguishé* appearance which it bears above all others in the throng. They consist of the white wheels lightly picked out with green and crimson ; the high-stepping action, blood-like shape, and brilliant *manège* of its dark bay horses ; the perfect style of its driver ; the height (six feet two) of its slim, spider-limbed, powdered footman, perked up at least three feet above the roof of the carriage, and occupying his eminence with that peculiar air of accidental superiority which we take to be the ideal of footman perfection, and finally, the exceedingly light, airy, and (if we may so speak) intellectual character of the whole set-out. The arms and supporters blazoned on the centre panels, and the small coronet beneath the

window, indicate the nobility of station ; and if ever the nobility of nature was blazoned on the ‘complement extern’ of humanity, it is on the lovely face within.”

P. G. PATMORE : ‘My Friends and Acquaintance.’

Enter when you would the beautifully-arranged drawing-room of Lady Blessington, with its gorgeous furnishing, resplendent lights, ample mirrors, and all the accessories of value and taste, some one you were sure to meet who was a Memory thenceforward. The list of her guests, taking any one of her “evenings,” would comprise nearly all the leading men of the time—Earl Grey, Lord Durham, Lord Brougham, the “Iron Duke,” occasionally the elder and the younger Disraeli, Walter Savage Landor, Edwin Landseer, James Smith, John Galt, “Barry Cornwall,” Thomas Moore, Campbell, Lord Lytton and Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, Dr. William Beattie, Colley Grattan—a number of names crowd upon my memory as I write—statesmen, lawyers, artists, men of letters, and foreigners of all countries. The Emperor Napoleon was a frequent guest, and here I have met him more than once when there seemed little prospect indeed that the silent, apparently ungenial, and seemingly unintellectual man, who usually occupied a neglected corner, would fill the *premier rôle* on the great stage of the world. . . . It is true few women were encountered there. I can recall none but her sister, Lady Canterbury ; another sister, much younger, married to a French count ; and her two nieces. I once saw “the Guiccioli” there.

S. C. HALL : ‘A Book of Memories of Great Men

and Women of the Age.' London : Virtue & Co., 1871.

Mild Wilberforce, by all beloved, Once owned this hallowed spot, Whose zealous eloquence improved The fettered Negro's lot ; Yet here still Slavery attacks, When Blessington invites ; The chains from which <i>he</i> freed the Blacks <i>She</i> rivets on the Whites.	"Gore house, an im- promptu."
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JAMES SMITH : Quoted by R. R. Madden, in ' Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington.'

Of Lady Blessington's tact, kindness and remarkable beauty Procter always spoke with ardor, and abated nothing from the popular idea of that fascinating person. He thought she had done more in her time to institute good feeling and social intercourse among men of letters than any other lady in England, and he gave her eminent credit for bringing forward the rising talent of the metropolis without waiting to be prompted by a public verdict.

JAMES T. FIELDS : ' Barry Cornwall and Some of His Friends.' Boston : James R. Osgood & Co., 1876.

A friend in Italy had kindly given me a letter to Lady Blessington, and with a strong curiosity to see this celebrated lady, I called on the second day after my arrival in London. It was "deep i' the afternoon," but I had not yet learned the full meaning of "town hours,"

Influence
among men
of letters.

N. P. Wil-
lis describes
her.

"Her ladyship had not come down to breakfast." I gave the letter and my address to the powdered footman, and had scarce reached home when a note arrived inviting me to call the same evening at ten.

In a long library lined alternately with splendidly bound books and mirrors, and with a deep window of the breadth of the room, opening upon Hyde Park, I found Lady Blessington alone. The picture, to my eye, as the door opened was a very lovely one. A woman of remarkable beauty, half buried in a *fauteuil* of yellow satin, reading by a magnificent lamp suspended from the centre of the arched ceiling ; sofas, couches, ottomans, and busts, arranged in rather a crowded sumptuousness through the room ; enamelled tables, covered with expensive and elegant trifles in every corner, and a delicate white hand relieved on the back of a book, to which the eye was attracted by the blaze of diamond rings. As the servant mentioned my name, she rose and gave me her hand very cordially, and a gentleman entering immediately after, she presented me to her son-in-law, Count D'Orsay, the well-known Pelham of London, and certainly the most splendid specimen of a man, and a well dressed one, that I had ever seen. Tea was brought in immediately, and conversation went swimmingly on.

The portrait of Lady Blessington in the 'Book of Beauty' is not unlike her, but it is still an unfavorable likeness. A picture by Sir Thomas

**Appearance
at forty.**

Lawrence hung opposite me, taken, perhaps, at the age of eighteen, which is more like her, and as captivating a representation of a just matured woman, full of loveliness and love, the kind of creature with whose divine sweetness the gazer's heart

aches, as ever was drawn in the painter's most inspired hour. The original is now (she confessed it very frankly) forty. She looks something on the sunny side of thirty. Her person is full, but preserves all the fineness of an admirable shape; her foot is not crowded in a satin slipper for which a Cinderella might be looked for in vain, and her complexion (an unusually fair skin with very dark hair and eyebrows) is of even a girlish delicacy and freshness. Her dress of blue satin was cut low, and folded across her bosom, in a way to show to advantage the round and sculpture-like curve and whiteness of a pair of exquisite shoulders, while her hair dressed close to her head and parted simply on her forehead with a rich *feronière* of turquoise, enveloped in clear outline a head with which it would be difficult to find a fault. Her features are regular, and her mouth, the most expressive of them, has a ripe fullness and freedom of play peculiar to the Irish physiognomy, and expressive of the most unsuspecting good-humor. Add to all this a voice merry and sad by turns, but always musical, and manners of the most unpretending elegance, yet even more remarkable for their winning kindness, and you have the most prominent traits of one of the most lovely and fascinating women I have ever seen.

NATHANIEL P. WILLIS : 'Pencillings by the Way.'
New York : Charles Scribner, 1853.

Lady Blessington was fair, florid-complexioned, with sparkling eyes and white, high forehead, above which her bright brown hair was smoothly braided beneath a light and simple blonde cap, in which were

a few touches of sky-blue satin ribbon that singularly well became her, setting off her buxom face and its vivid coloring.

MARY COWDEN CLARKE: 'Recollections of Writers.'
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

She was inclined to *embonpoint*;* her hair abundant and of a lightish brown; but she always wore caps fastened under the chin; her complexion fair and healthily tinged, deriving no aid from art; she was too stout to be graceful, but she had a natural grace that regulated all her movements.

S. C. HALL: 'Book of Memories.'

At that period [1832] she was past her prime no doubt, but she was still remarkably handsome; not so, perhaps, if tried by the established canons of beauty; but there was a fascination about her look and manner that greatly augmented her personal charms. Her face and features were essentially Irish, and that is the highest compliment I can pay them.

S. C. HALL: 'Retrospect of a Long Life.'

I went by Landor's desire to Lady Blessington's, to whom he had named me. She is a charming and very remarkable person. . . . Her dress rich, and her library most splendid. Her book about Lord Byron (now publishing by dribblets

**Landor's
admiration.**

* Leigh Hunt describes her in 'The Feast of the Violets,' as
"A Grace after dinner—a Venus grown fat."

in the *New Monthly Magazine*), and her other writings, give her in addition the character of a *bel esprit*. Landor says that she was to Lord Blessington the most devoted wife he ever knew. He says, also, that she was by far the most beautiful woman he ever saw, and was so deemed at the Court of George IV. She is now, Landor says, about thirty, but I should have thought her older. [She was forty-five.] She is a great talker, but her talk is rather narrative than declamatory, and very pleasant.

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON : *Diary*, 1832, in 'Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence,' edited by T. Sadler. Boston : J. R. Osgood & Co., 1871.

Count D'Orsay was so little guided by principle that he could not expect general credit for the purity of his relations with Lady Blessington ; yet, I think, he might honestly have claimed it.

**Friendship
of Count D'-
Orsay.**

S. C. HALL : 'Retrospect of a Long Life.'

On the 10th of May, 1849, I visited Gore House for the last time. The auction was going on. There was a large assemblage of people of fashion. Every room was thronged ; the well-known library-saloon, in which the conversations took place, was crowded, but not with guests. . . . People, as they passed through the room, poked the furniture, pulled about the precious objects of art and ornaments of various kinds that lay on the table. . . . It was a relief to leave that room : I went into another, the dining-room, where I had frequently enjoyed, "in goodly company," the elegant hospitality of one who was

**Gore House
demolished.**

indeed "a most kind hostess." . . . In another apartment, where the pictures were being sold, portraits by Lawrence, sketches by Landseer and Maclise, innumerable likenesses of Lady Blessington by various artists; several of the Count D'Orsay, representing him driving, riding out on horseback, sporting, and at work in his studio; his own collection of portraits of all the frequenters of note or mark in society of the villa Belvedere, the Palazzo Negroni, the Hotel Ney, Seamore Place, and Gore House, in quick succession were brought to the hammer. . . . This was the most signal ruin of an establishment of a person of high rank I ever witnessed. Nothing of value was saved from the wreck, with the exception of the portrait of Lady Blessington by Chalon, and one or two more pictures. Here was a total smash, a crash on a grand scale of ruin. To the honor of Lady Blessington be it mentioned, she saved nothing, with the few exceptions I have referred to, from the wreck. . . . I am able to state, on authority, that the gross amount of the sale was £13,385, and the net sum realized was £11,985 4s. The portrait of Lady Blessington, by Lawrence, which cost originally only £80, I saw sold for £336. It was purchased for the Marquis of Hertford.

R. R. MADDEN: 'Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington.'

She was a steady friend, through good report and evil report, for those to whom she professed friendship. . . . The courage with which she
A steady friend. . . . clung to her attachments long after they brought her only shame and sorrow, spoke for the

affectionate heart, which no luxury could spoil and no vicissitude sour.

She must have had originally the most sunny of sunny natures. As it was, I have never seen anything like her vivacity and sweet cheerfulness **A sunny nature.** during the early years when I knew her. She had a singular power of entertaining herself by her own stories; the keenness of an Irishwoman in relishing fun and repartee, strange turns of language, and bright touches of character. A fairer, kinder, more universal recipient of everything that came within the possibilities of her mind, I have never known. I think the only genuine author whose merits she was averse to admit was Hood; and yet she knew Rabelais, and delighted in 'Elia.' It was her real disposition to dwell on beauties rather than faults. Critical she could be, and as judiciously critical as any woman I have ever known, but she never seemed to be so willingly. When a poem was read to her, or a book given to her, she could always touch on the best passage, the bright point; and rarely missed the purpose of the work, if purpose it had.

HENRY F. CHORLEY: 'Autobiography, Memoir and Letters.'

Although I knew her history sufficiently well, I attributed to this particular daughter of Erin her share of the "wild sweet briery fence that
"The victim of circumstances." round the flower of Erin dwells," and felt conviction that for the unhappy circumstances of Lady Blessington's early life, the

sins of others, far more than her own, were responsible, and that she had been to a great extent the victim of circumstances. To that opinion I still hold—some thirty years after her death, and more than fifty since I first saw her.

S. C. HALL : 'Retrospect of a Long Life.'

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

1787—1855.



MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Mary Russell Mitford was born at Alresford, Hampshire, on the 16th of December, 1787. She was the daughter of George Mitford, a physician of good family, and Mary Russell, whose father had been rector of Ashe and Tadley, and vicar of Overton. The little Mary Russell Mitford was but four or five years old when the family removed from Alresford to Lyme Regis, Dorsetshire ; thence they went to London. Here occurred, on Mary's eleventh birthday, the famous incident of the lottery-ticket. Dr. Mitford, reinforced in fortune by his daughter's childish persistence, next went to reside in Reading. "Mezza," as her parents called her, remained at school in Hans Place until 1802. About this time Bertram House, a country residence at Grasely, near Reading, in the improvement of which Dr. Mitford had freely expended the fairy gold of the lottery, was at last ready for occupation. This was the home of the Mitford family until 1820, when pecuniary embarrassments, caused by the doctor's extravagance and love of play, drove them to the now famous cottage at Three Mile Cross.

She had already published several books of verse, which have been long forgotten : *Miscellaneous Poems*, *Christina*, *Blanch of Castile*, *Narrative Poems on Female Character*, and others. She speaks disparagingly of one of these volumes in a letter to B.

R. Haydon in 1819. "It was written when extreme youth and haste might apologize for the incorrectness, the silliness, and the commonplace with which it abounds, but I am afraid it has deficiencies which are worse than any fault." "You are aware, I hope," she says in another letter, "that all clever people begin by publishing bad poems." She was now forced, at thirty-three, to take up her pen in earnest. She worked steadily both at plays and at the sketches collected in 1824 under the title, *OUR VILLAGE*. In 1823 her first tragedy, *Julian*, was successfully performed at Covent Garden, with Macready as the principal character. *The Foscari* appeared in 1826, and *Dramatic Scenes, Sonnets and Other Poems*, in 1827. Towards the end of 1828, *Rienzi* was produced at Drury Lane, Charles Young enacting the hero. Miss Mitford is said to have received £400 from the theatre, and to have sold eight thousand copies of the play. Other works in this field were *Otto*, *Inez de Castro*, and *Charles I.* In 1835 was published *BELFORD REGIS*, a sequel to *OUR VILLAGE*, and in 1852, *RECOLLECTIONS OF A LITERARY LIFE*. In 1854 a novel, *Ather-ton*, appeared, and in the same year her dramatic works were collected.

Mrs. Mitford had died in 1830, Dr. Mitford in 1842. In 1851 Miss Mitford removed from Three Mile Cross to Swallowfield, where, on the 10th of January, 1855, she died. She had been ill for some time, never having recovered from the shock of an accident that had occurred in 1853 while she was driving in a pony-chaise.

In reading the Life of Miss Mitford, which the Rev. Mr. L'Estrange has compiled from her letters, it is in-

teresting to mark the development of her character by her misfortunes. The indolent, novel-devouring young lady of Bertram House, with her school-girlish conceit, is a far less lovable person than the self-sacrificing woman who toiled uncomplainingly for a spendthrift father in the cottage at Three Mile Cross. As was said of her, on the occasion of her accident, by one of her correspondents, she was "like mignonette, the sweeter the more it is bruised."

Her criticism was singularly capricious. For instance, she calmly pronounced 'Henry Esmond' commonplace; the adjective recoils upon her own work. Commonplace the latter is, but in the same pleasant sense in which sweet fresh air, and primroses, and cowslips, and the meadow-sweet she loved, are commonplace.

In common with many only children, especially where the mother is of a grave and home-loving nature, I learned to read at a very early age.

Before I was three years old my father **Preecocity.** would perch me on the breakfast-table to exhibit my one accomplishment to some admiring guest, who admired all the more, because, a small, puny child, looking far younger than I really was, nicely dressed, as only children generally are, and gifted with an affluence of curls, I might have passed for the twin sister of my own great doll. On the table was I perched to read some Foxite newspaper, '*Courier*,' or '*Morning Chronicle*,' the Whiggish oracles of the day, and as my delight in the high-seasoned politics of sixty years ago was naturally less than that

of my hearers, this display of precocious acquirement was commonly rewarded, not by cakes or sugar-plums, too plentiful in my case to be very greatly cared for, but by a sort of payment in kind. I read leading articles to please the company ; and my dear mother recited 'The Children in the Wood' to please me. This was my reward ; and I looked for my favorite ballad after every performance just as the piping bull-finch that hung in the window looked for his lump of sugar after going through 'God Save the King.'

A pleasant home, in truth, it was. A large house in a little town of the north of Hampshire—a town, so small that but for an ancient market, **Early home.** very slenderly attended, nobody would have dreamt of calling it anything but a village. The breakfast-room, where I first possessed myself of my beloved ballads, was a lofty and spacious apartment, literally lined with books, which, with its Turkey carpet, its glowing fire, its sofas and its easy chairs, seemed, what indeed it was, a very nest of English comfort. The windows opened on a large, old-fashioned garden, full of old-fashioned flowers—stocks, roses, honeysuckles, and pinks ; and that again led into a grassy orchard, abounding with fruit-trees, a picturesque country church with its yews and lindens on one side, and beyond, a down as smooth as velvet, dotted with rich islands of coppice, hazel, woodbine, hawthorn and holly reaching up into the young oaks, and overhanging flowery patches of prim-roses, wood-sorrel, wild hyacinths, and wild strawberries. On the side opposite the church, in a hollow fringed with alders and bulrushes, gleamed the bright clear lakelet, radiant with swans and water-lilies, which

the simple townsfolk were content to call the Great Pond.

What a play-ground was that orchard ! and what playfellows were mine ! Nancy [the maid], with her trim prettiness, my own dear father, handsomest and cheerfullest of men, and the great Newfoundland dog Coe, who used to lie down at my feet, as if to invite me to mount him, and then to prance off with his burden, as if he enjoyed the fun as much as we did. Happy, happy days ! It is good to have the memory of such a childhood !

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : ' Recollections of a Literary Life.' New York : Harper & Bros., 1852.

One of William Harness's earliest friends—born at Alresford, in the same woodland district—was Mary Russell Mitford. Their families had long been connected : Dr. Harness gave away Miss Russell, who became Miss Mitford's mother ; and it was here that the future authoress passed those happy days—her earliest years were her happiest—to which she reverted with such fond remembrance in after life. Here, in the spacious library, lined with her grandfather Russell's books, or in the old-fashioned garden, among the stocks and holly-hocks, she and little William would chase away the summer hours, until the time when the carriage arrived, which was to carry her playmate back to Wickham. A picture taken when she was about six years old enables us to form some idea of her at this time. It represents her with her hair cut short across her forehead, and flowing down at the back in long glossy ringlets, while in her face there is

a sedateness and gravity beyond her years, such as we might expect to find in a young lady devoted to study, and celebrated for early feats of memory.

REV. A. G. L'ESTRANGE : 'Literary Life of the Rev. William Harness.' London : Hurst & Blackett, 1871.

Most undoubtedly I was a spoilt child. Everybody spoilt me, most of all the person whose power in that way was greatest, the dear papa himself. ^{A spoilt child.} Not content with spoiling me indoors he spoilt me out. How well I remember his carrying me round the orchard on his shoulder, holding fast my little three-year old feet, while the little hands hung on to his pigtail, which I called my bridle, . . . hung so fast, and tugged so heartily, that sometimes the ribbon would come off between my fingers, and send his hair floating, and the powder flying down his back. That climax of mischief was the crowning joy of all.

Nor were these my only rides. This dear papa of mine, whose gay and careless temper all the professional *etiquette* of the world could never tame into the staid gravity proper to a doctor of medicine, happened to be a capital horseman ; and abandoning the close carriage, which, at that time, was the regulation conveyance of a physician, almost wholly to my mother, used to pay his country visits on a favorite blood-mare, whose extreme docility and gentleness tempted him, after certain short trials round our old course, the orchard, into having a pad constructed, perched upon which I might occasionally accompany him, when the weather was favorable, and the distance not too great.

Very delightful were those rides across the breezy Hampshire downs on a sunny summer morning ; and grieved was I when a change of residence from a small town to a large one, and going among people who did not know our ways, put an end to this perfectly harmless, if somewhat unusual pleasure.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : ' Recollections of a Literary Life.'

On her tenth birthday Dr. Mitford took the child to a lottery-office, and bade her select a ticket. She determined—guided, to all appearance, by one of the unaccountable whims of childhood The lottery ticket.—that she would have none other than the number 2,224. Some difficulty attended the purchase of the coveted number, but the little lottery patroness had her way at last, and on the day of drawing there fell to the lot of the happy holder of ticket No. 2,224 a prize of £20,000. Alas ! the holder of the fortunate ticket was happy only in name. By the time his daughter was a woman, there remained to Dr. Mitford, of all his lottery adventure had brought him, a Wedgwood dinner service with the family crest !

S. C. HALL : *Note in* ' Retrospect of a Long Life.' New York : D. Appleton & Co., 1883.

We find the doctor, about the year 1797, residing at Reading, with his phaeton, his spaniels and his greyhounds, and enjoying his good-fortune with all his wonted hilarity of spirit, prodigality of expense, and utter want of consideration for the future. . . His daughter was at this time at school in Hans Place—a small square into At school.

which you turn on the right hand out of Sloane Street, as you go from Knightsbridge to Chelsea. . . Once fairly entered at M. St. Quentin's school, Mary Russell Mitford seems to have applied herself, with all her heart and mind, to learn whatever the masters and mistresses were prepared to teach her. French, Italian, history, geography, astronomy, music, singing, drawing, dancing, were not enough to satisfy her eager thirst for instruction : and we find her informing her mother that she intended to learn Latin. . . Excepting music, there was no branch of education within her reach at the Hans Place School which she was not zealous and successful in the pursuit of ; but in that accomplishment she took little pleasure. She never at any time of her life showed much taste or feeling for it.

Like so very many precocious children, she was of a scrofulous temperament, and had suffered much from illness in her infancy. In person she was short for her age ; and, there is no possibility of evading the word by any gentle synonym or extenuating periphrasis, she was, in sincere truth and very plain English, decidedly fat. Her face, of which the expression was kind, gentle, and intelligent, ought to have been handsome, for the features were all separately good and like her father's, but from some almost imperceptible disproportion, and the total change of coloring, the beauty had evanesced. But although very plain in figure and in face, she was never common-looking. She showed in her countenance and in her mild self-possession, that she was no ordinary child ; and with her sweet smile, her gentle temper, her animated conversation, her keen enjoyment of life, and her incomparable voice,

there were few of the prettiest children of her age who won so much love and admiration from their friends, whether young or old, as little Mary Mitford. And except, indeed, that her hair became white at an early age, few persons, it may be added, in passing through so many vicissitudes of life, ever altered so little, either in character or appearance.

Her delight in the sports of the field was no more than a sympathetic affection of her father's pleasure. It was theoretical and not practical. She was no horsewoman. She was capable of very ^{Home life} ~~after leaving~~ little exercise beyond a modest walk. . . . ^{school.}

She remained at home and received visits. She went out in the green chariot with her mother and returned them. They drove into Reading after their visits were all paid to do their shopping and hear if there were any news, or rather to pick up the present gossip of the neighborhood ; and when these affairs were dispatched, and they found themselves again at home, the daughter would lie for hours together on a sofa, with her dog by her side, reading anything—good, bad, or indifferent, which came to hand, guided by chance or fancy, without any apparent attempt at selection. The number of books she read is almost incredible. . . . Undoubtedly the young lady must have consumed a great deal of trash ; but there are some constitutions with which nothing seems to disagree ; and probably there was none of these works from which she did not derive some advantage. If she met with nothing good to imitate, she at least learned to see what was bad and to be avoided.

REV. A. G. L'ESTRANGE : 'Life of Mary Russell Mitford.' London : Richard Bentley, 1870.

The exercise which I do dearly love is to be whirled along fast, fast, fast, by a blood-horse in a gig ; this under a bright sun, with a brisk wind full in my face, is my highest notion of physical pleasure ; even walking is not so exhilarating.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, in the former's ' Life,' by L'Estrange.

But reading is my favorite mode of idleness. I like it better than any of my play-works, better than firing, better than violeting, better than working gowntails, better than playing with Miranda (her dog), better than feeding the white kitten, better than riding in a gig, better than anything except that other pet idleness, talking (that is to say *writing*) to you.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, in ' Life,' by L'Estrange.

I am inclined to think that her correspondence, so full of point in allusions, so full of anecdote and recollections, will be considered among her finest writings. Her criticisms, not always the wisest, were always piquant and readable. She had such a charming humor and her style was so delightful, that her friendly notes had a relish about them quite their own.

JAMES T. FIELDS : ' Yesterdays With Authors.' Boston : James R. Osgood & Co., 1872.

Soon after his friend's death, Mr. Harness commenced the task of looking through her letters, but he

found the work much more arduous than he had anticipated. Although her habits were in every respect frugal, her favorite economy seemed to be in paper. Her letters were scribbled on innumerable small scraps—sometimes on printed circulars—sometimes across engravings—and half a dozen of these would form one epistle and in course of time become confused and interchanged in their envelopes. When we add to this that toward the end of her life Miss Mitford's handwriting became almost microscopic, it can be easily understood that the arrangement of these sibylline leaves was no short or easy undertaking.

REV. A. G. L'ESTRANGE : 'Literary Life of the Rev. William Harness.'

There are intelligent persons who make a living out of their fellow-creatures by pretending to read character in hand-writing. What would they make, I wonder, out of this delicate, microscopic writing, looking as if it were done with a stylus, and without blot or flaw? The paper is all odds and ends, and not a scrap of it but is covered and crossed; the very flaps of the envelopes, and even the outside of them, having their message. The reason of this is that the writer had lived in a time when postage was very dear; like Southey, she used to boast that she could send more for her money by post than any one else; and when the necessity no longer existed, the custom remained. How, at her age, her eyes could read what she herself had written used to puzzle me.

JAMES PAYN : 'Some Literary Recollections.' New York : Harper & Bros., 1884.

He was the greatest darling that ever lived. . . . He was a large black dog, of the largest and strongest kind of greyhounds ; very fast and honest
Her dog
"Moss
Trooper." and resolute past example ; an excellent killer of hares, and a most magnificent and noble-looking creature. His coat was of the finest and most glossy black, with no white, except a very little under his feet (pretty white shoenails, I used to call them)—little beautiful white spot, quite small, in the very middle of his neck, between his chin and his breast—and a white mark on his bosom. His face was singularly beautiful ; the finest black eyes, very bright, and yet sweet, and fond and tender—eyes that seemed to speak ; a beautiful, complacent mouth, which used sometimes to show one of the long, white teeth at the side ; a jet-black nose ; a brow which was bent and flexible . . . and gave great sweetness of expression, and a look of thought to his dear face. There never was such a dog ! His temper was, beyond comparison, the sweetest ever known. Nobody ever saw him out of humor. And his sagacity was equal to his temper.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : Quoted in her 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

We have a greyhound, called May Flower, of excellent grace and symmetry—just of the color of the May blossom—like marble with the sun upon
Her dog
"May Flower." it ; and she kills every hare she sees
 —takes them up in the middle of the back, brings them in her mouth to my father, and lays them down at his feet. I assure you she is quite a study while bringing the hares—the fine con-

trast of color—her beautiful position, head and tail up, and her long neck arched like that of a swan—with the shade shifting upon her beautiful limbs, and her black eyes really emitting light !

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, in the former's ' Life,' by L'Estrange.

Did you ever see a glow-worm half way up a high tree ? We did last night. It was a tall elm, stripped of large branches almost to the top, as the fashion is in this country, but the trunk clothed with little green twigs, upon one of which the glow-worm hung like a lamp, looking so beautiful !

Pleasure in
a glow-
worm.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, in the former's ' Life,' by L'Estrange.

In truth, nothing can be more vulgar than my taste in flowers, for which I have a passion. I like scarcely any but the common ones. First and best I love violets, and primroses, and cowslips, and wood anemones, and the whole train of field flowers ; then roses of every kind and color, especially the great cabbage rose ; then the blossoms of the lilac and laburnum, the horse-chestnut, the asters, the jasmine, and the honeysuckle ; and to close the list, lilies of the valley, sweet peas, and the red pinks which are found in cottagers' gardens. This is my confession of faith.

Love of
field flowers.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, in the former's ' Life,' by L'Estrange.

All this warm weather I sit out of doors in the plantations ; just on one side of my seat is a filbert tree, the branches of which spread quite
Pet robin. across my feet, and on these branches every day comes a young red-breast. First of all he appeared at a distance, then he came nearer, then he came close home, and now, the moment I call "Bobby," he comes. . . . He comes on my feet and my gown, feeds almost on my hand (not quite), and has by example tamed his papa and one or two of his brothers and sisters, who come like him and feed from a board on the tree, quite close to me ; but they do not, like my own Bobby, come when they are called. Is this usual in the summer ? I know they are tame in the winter ; but this is quite a young bird—has never known cold or hunger. He had not a red feather in his breast a fortnight ago. He likes very much to be talked to, in a soft, monotonous, caressing tone—"Bobby ! Bobby ! Bobby !"—and turns his little head in the prettiest attitudes of listening that you can imagine, and generally finishes by taking two or three flights across me, so close as almost to touch my face.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, in the former's 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

Her dogs and her geraniums were her great glories. She used to write me long letters about Fanchon, a dog whose personal acquaintance I had made some time before, while on a visit
Dogs and geraniums, in later life. to her cottage. Every virtue under heaven she attributed to that canine individual ; and I was obliged to allow in my return letters,

that, since our planet began to spin, nothing comparable to Fanchon had ever run on four legs. I had also known Flush, the ancestor of Fanchon, intimately, and had been accustomed to hear wonderful things of that dog; but Fanchon had graces and genius unique.

JAMES T. FIELDS: 'Yesterdays with Authors.'

The last days of March, 1820, were employed in removing from the home which they had occupied for nearly twenty years, at first in affluence and comfort, but latterly with a severe economy, and a constant struggle against encroaching ruin. Every visit of the doctor to London was followed by some fresh privation to his wife and daughter. Within six years of the completion of Bertram House—so early as 1808—great reductions had been required in the establishment. The servant out of livery had been dispensed with. There had ceased to be any lady's maid. The footman had degenerated into an awkward lad, who was not only expected to wait at table and go out with the carriage, but to make himself useful in the stable or the garden. The carriage horses were employed on the work of the farm. . . . By and by Mrs. Mitford is harassed by difficulties in obtaining remittances for the moderate expenses of her diminished household. Tradesmen refuse to serve the house with the common requirements of the family till previous accounts are settled. On several occasions they are at a loss whence to procure food for the greyhounds, and once Mrs. Mitford writes imploringly to the doctor, with the greatest earnestness, but without the slightest intima-

tion of reproach, requesting him to send her a *one pound note* by return of post, as they are actually in want of bread. . . . And who was the author of this distress? The father alone. The wife, by the most careful management and self-denial; the daughter, by her literary industry; were doing every thing in their power to lighten its pressure and ward off its fall. It was the sole work of the husband. The cause of all this misery was the doctor's love of play, and its concomitant dabbling in gambling speculations.

REV. A. G. L'ESTRANGE: 'Life of Mary Russell Mitford.'

Mr. Horne, in his edition of Mrs. Barrett Browning's letters, tells us that Miss Mitford's father was "a jovial, stick-at-nothing, fox-hunting squire of the three-bottle class," — a tolerably correct description, if we substitute "coursing" for "fox-hunting," and "doctor" for "squire." . . . It appears from incidental notices that he had a keen relish for fine wine, and that indulgence in it did not invariably make him the better. Miss Mitford, no doubt, owed to him much of her natural buoyancy of spirit, and some of her predilection for country pursuits and for the canine race, of which greyhounds were his favorites. Children and dogs loved him, and so did others who did not understand him, or refused to see his faults. Women have generally represented Dr. Mitford as amiable and pleasant; there was something cheering and hearty in his familiarity. The character is not uncommon; he was one of those good-looking, profligate spendthrifts,

who, reckless of consequences, bring misery upon their families and remain dear to their mothers and daughters. . . . Dr. Mitford often did kind actions, which it is unfair to ignore ; he seems even to have had some sort of generosity, and the ease with which he parted with his money was one of his most unfortunate weaknesses. But Miss Mitford's appreciation of her father was mostly due to filial devotion. Never was affection more severely tried. She had to see thousands, seventy thousand pounds, passing out of his careless hands until he became dependent upon the small pittance she could earn by arduous literary labor.

REV. A. G. L'ESTRANGE : 'The Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford.' New York : Harper & Bros., 1882.

Our residence is a cottage—no, not a cottage—it does not deserve the name—a messuage or tenement, such as a little farmer who had made twelve or fourteen hundred pounds might retire ^{Cottage at Three Mile Cross.} to, when he left off business to live on his means. It consists of a series of closets, the largest of which may be about eight feet square, which they call parlors, and kitchens and pantries ; some of them minus a corner, which has been unnaturally filched for a chimney ; others deficient in half a side, which has been truncated by the shelving roof. Behind is a garden about the size of a good drawing-room, with an arbor which is a complete sentry-box of privet. On one side a public-house, on the other a village shop, and right opposite a cobbler's stall. . . . Notwithstanding all this, "the cabin," as Bobadil says, "is

convenient." It is within reach of my dear old walks ; the banks where I find my violets ; the meadows full of cowslips ; and the woods where the wood-sorrel blows.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, April 8, 1820 ; in the former's 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

I have grown exceedingly fond of this little place. Did I ever tell you I disliked it ? I love it of all things—have taken root completely—could be content to live and die here. To be sure the rooms are of the smallest. I, in our little parlor, look something like a black-bird in a goldfinch's cage—but it is so snug and comfortable.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford*, June 21, 1820 ; in the former's 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

My little garden is a perfect rosary—the greenest and most blossomy nook that ever the sun shone upon.

The cottage garden. It is almost shut in by buildings ; one a long open shed, very pretty, a sort of a rural arcade, where we sit. On the other side is an old granary, to which we mount by outside wooden steps, also very pretty. Then, there is an opening to a little court, also backed by buildings, but with room enough to let in the sunshine, the north-west sunshine that comes aslant in summer evenings, through and under a large elder tree. One end is closed by our pretty irregular cottage, which, as well as the granary, is covered by cherry trees, vines, roses, jessamine, honeysuckle, and grand spires of hollyhocks. The other is

comparatively open, showing over high pales the blue sky and a range of woody hills. All and every part is untrimmed, antique, weather-stained and homely as can be imagined—gratifying the eye by its exceeding picturesqueness, and the mind by the certainty that no pictorial effect was intended—that it owes all its charms to “rare accident.” My father laughs at my passionate love for my little garden—and perhaps you will laugh too; but I assure you it’s a “bonny bit” of earth as ever was crammed full of lilies and roses.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to B. R. Haydon*, in the former’s ‘Life,’ by L’Estrange.

I would not recommend any friend to write for the stage, because it nearly killed me with its unspeakable worries and anxieties, and I am certainly ^{Difficulties} ten years older for having so written ; ^{with plays.} but of all forms of poetry it is the one I prefer, and I would always advise the writing with a view to the production of the piece upon the boards, because it avoids the danger of interminable dialogues of coldness and languor. . . . Write for the stage, but don’t bring the play out—that is my advice. If you wish to know my reasons, you may find some of them in the fact that one of my tragedies had seven last acts, and that two others fought each other during a whole season at Covent Garden Theatre; Mr. Macready insisted on producing one, Charles Kemble was equally bent upon the other—neither of them even pretending to any superiority of either play but because one, a man of fifty, would play the young man’s part, and the other insisted that none but himself should have anything like a tell-

ing part at all. Both were read in the green-room, both advertised—and just think of the poor author in the country all the time, while the money was earnestly wanted, and the non-production fell upon her like a sin!

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD: *Letter to Mr. Digby Starkey*, in 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford,' by L'Estrange.

I would rather serve in a shop—rather scour floors—rather nurse children, than undergo these tremendous and interminable disputes, and this unwomanly publicity.

Pray forgive this sad no-letter. Alas! the free and happy hours, when I could read and think and prattle for you, are passed away. Oh! will they ever return? I am now chained to a desk, eight, ten, twelve hours a day, at mere drudgery. All my thoughts of writing are for hard money. All my correspondence is on hard business. . . . A washerwoman hath a better trade. . . . I myself hate all my own doings, and consider the being forced to this drudgery as the greatest misery that life can afford. But it is my wretched fate and must be undergone—so long, at least, as my father is spared to me. If I should have the misfortune to lose him, I shall go quietly to the workhouse, and never write another line—a far preferable destiny.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD: *Letter to Sir William Elford*, in the former's 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

Every day we had from sixty to seventy visitors, and three times more parties made for me than I could have attended, even if I had refused all exhibiting

show parties and gone only to friends, dining with what they called quiet parties of twenty or thirty, and thirty or forty more arriving to tea. At last, however, I was forced to break off this, or ^{Lionized in} I should have returned to the country ^{London.}

without seeing any public place whatever ; and my last week or ten days were spent in seeing all to be seen in London in the morning, and attending operas and plays every evening—the artists all writing to show me their galleries, and the very best private boxes everywhere being reserved for my accommodation—no queen could have been more deferentially received.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Emily Jephson*, 1834, in 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford,' by L'Estrange.

Miss Landon called her "Sancho Panza in petticoats" ; yet among the lanes and glades of her own sunny Berkshire she might have aptly seemed a merry milk-maid — proper to ^{Town} and ^{country} the place. Her round figure, jolly face, ^{manners.} perpetual smile, ready greeting, kindly words, seemed of kin to the nature that is away from crowded streets. Assuredly she was more at home at Three-Mile Cross than she was in London. In London she seemed always *en garde*, thought an air of patronage was the right thing, and that an author about whom the whole world was talking, and who had achieved the greatest of all literary successes—the production of a tragedy—was bound to be stately as well as cordial—to have company manners that she would have thrown off as a paralyzing incum-

brance where the breezes blew among the trees that shaded her native heath.

S. C. HALL : ' Retrospect of a Long Life.'

I certainly was disappointed, when a stout little lady, tightened up in a shawl, rolled into the parlor in Newman Street, and Mrs. Hofland announced her as Miss Mitford; her short petticoats showing wonderfully stout leather boots, her shawl *bundled* on, and a little black coal-scuttle bonnet—when bonnets were expanding—added to the effect of her natural shortness and rotundity; but her manner was that of a cordial country gentlewoman; the pressure of her fat little hands (for she extended both) was warm; her eyes both soft and bright, looked kindly and frankly into mine; and her pretty, rosy mouth dimpled with smiles that were always sweet and friendly. At first I did not think her at all "grand or stilted," though she declared she had been quite spoilt—quite ruined since she came to London, with all the fine compliments she had received; but the trial was yet to come. "Suppose—suppose 'Rienzi' should be—" and she shook her head. Of course, in full chorus, we declared that impossible. "No! she would not spend an evening with us until after the first night; if the play went ill, or even coldly, she would run away, and never be again seen or heard of; if it succeeded"—She drew her rotund person to its full height, and endeavored to stretch her neck, and the expression of her beaming face assumed an air of unmistakable triumph. She was always pleasant to look at, and had her face not been cast in so broad—so "outspread"—

Mrs. Hall's
first impres-
sion of Miss
Mitford.

a mould, she would have been handsome ; even with that disadvantage, if her figure had been tall enough to carry her head with dignity, she would have been so ; but she was most vexatiously “ dumpy.”

She kept her promise to us, and after ‘ Rienzi’s ’ triumph, spent an evening at our house, “ the observed of all observers.” She did not, however, appear to advantage that evening ; her manner was constrained, and even haughty.

A little
spoiled by
success.

She got up tragedy looks, which did not harmonize with her naturally playful expression. She seated herself in a high chair, and was indignant at the offer of a foot-stool, though her feet barely touched the ground ; she received those who wished to be introduced to her *en reine* ; but such was her popularity just then, that all were gratified. She was most unbecomingly dressed in a striped satin something, neither high nor low, with very short sleeves, for her arms were white and finely formed ; she wore a large yellow turban, which added considerably to the size of her head. She had evidently bought the hideous thing *en route*, and put it on in the carriage, as she drove down to our house, for pinned at the back was a somewhat large card, on which were written, in somewhat large letters, these astounding words, “ Very chaste—only five and three-pence.” Under pretence of settling her turban, I removed the obnoxious notice.

MRS. S. C. HALL : ‘ Book of Memories.’ London : Virtue & Co., 1871.

We found Miss Mitford living literally in a cottage, neither *ornée* nor poetical—except inasmuch as it had a small garden crowded with the richest and most

beautiful profusion of flowers—where she lives with her father, a fresh, stout old man who is in his seventy-fifth year. She herself seemed **Herself again.** about fifty, short and fat, with very gray hair, perfectly visible under her cap, and neatly arranged in front. She has the simplest and kindest of manners, and entertained us for two hours with the most animated conversation, and a great variety of anecdotes, without any of the pretensions of an author by profession, and without any of the stiffness that generally belongs to single ladies of her age and reputation.

GEORGE TICKNOR: *Journal*, July 26th, 1835, in 'Life, Letters and Journals.' Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co., 1876.

My father—very kind to me in many respects, very attentive if I'm ill, very solicitous that my garden **Her one** should be nicely kept, that I should go **complaint of** her father. out with him and be amused—is yet, so far as art, literature and the drama are concerned, of a temper infinitely difficult to deal with. He hates and despises them, and all their professors . . . ; and is constantly taunting me with my "friends" and my "people" (as he calls them), reproaching me if I hold the slightest intercourse with author, editor, artist, or actor, and treating with frank contempt every one not of a certain station in the county. I am entirely convinced that he would consider Sir Thomas Lawrence, Sir Walter Scott, and Mrs. Siddons as his inferiors. Always this is very painful—strangely painful.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD: *Letter to Rev. William Harness*, in the former's 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

After frittering away the whole day, incessantly on foot, or otherwise fatiguing herself, at his beck and call, and receiving his friends, and reading him to sleep in the afternoons till she had **Hard life.** no voice left, the hour came when she might put him to bed. But her own day's work still remained to be done. It was not a sort of work which could be done by powers jaded like hers, without some stimulus or relief; and hence the necessity of doses of laudanum to carry her through her task. When the necessity ceased by the death of her father, her practice of taking laudanum ceased; but her health had become radically impaired, and her nervous system was rendered unfit to meet any such shock as that which overthrew it at last. Miss Mitford so toiling by candle-light, while the hard master who had made her his servant all day was asleep in the next room, is as painful an instance of the struggles of human life as the melancholy of a buffoon, or the heart-break—that "secret known to all"—of a boasting Emperor of all the Russias.

HARRIET MARTINEAU: 'Biographical Sketches.' New York: Leypoldt & Holt, 1869.

Our coachman (who, after telling him that we were Americans, had complimented us on speaking English, and "very good English, too,") professed an acquaintance of some twenty years' ^{Miss Mitford in 1839.} standing with Miss M., and assured us that she was "one of the dearest women in England," and the doctor (her father) "an 'earty old boy." And when he reined his horses up at her door, and she appeared to receive us, he said, "Now you would not take that little body there for

the great author, would you ? ” and certainly we should have taken her for nothing more than a kindly gentlewoman, who had never gone beyond the narrow sphere of the most refined social life. Miss M. is truly a “little body,” and as unlike as possible to the faces we have seen of her in the magazines, which all have a broad humor bordering on coarseness. She has a pale-gray, soul-lit eye, and hair as white as snow ; a wintry sign that has come prematurely upon her, as like signs come upon us while the year is yet fresh and undecayed. Her voice has a sweet, low tone, and her manner a natural frankness and affectionateness that we have been so long familiar with in their other modes of manifestation that it would have been indeed a disappointment not to have found them.

She led us directly through her house into her garden, a perfect bouquet of flowers. “I must show you my geraniums while it is light,” she said, “for I love them next to my father.”

CATHARINE M. SEDGWICK : ‘Letters from Abroad to Kindred at Home.’ New York : Harper & Bros., 1841.

There used to be, and there no doubt still is, if I had but the courage to go and look at it, a small, old-fashioned cottage at Three Mile Cross, near Reading, which stood in a garden close to the road. A strip of garden was on one side, a little pony-stable on the other, and the larger part of the garden at the back. It was a comfortable-looking, but still a real village cottage, with no town or suburb-look whatever about it. Small lattice windows, below and above, with roses

Looking
back.

and jasmine creeping round them all, established its rural character ; and there was a great buttress of a chimney rising from the ground at the garden-strip side, which was completely covered with a very ancient and very fine apricot tree. There the birds delighted to sit and sing among the leaves, and build too, in several snug nooks, and there in early autumn the wasps used to bite and bore into the rich ripe brown cracks of the largest apricots, and would issue forth in rage when any one of the sweetest of their property was brought down to the earth by the aid of a clothes-prop, guided under the superintending instructions of a venerable little gentlewoman in a garden-bonnet and shawl, with silver hair, very bright hazel eyes, and a rose-red smiling countenance. Altogether, it was one of the brightest faces any one ever saw.

"Now, my dear friend," would she say, "if you will only attend to my advice, you will get that apricot up there, which is quite in perfection. I have had my eye upon it these last ^{Mr. Horne's recollections.} three weeks, wondering nobody stole it.

The boys often get over into the garden before any of us are up. There now, collect all those leaves, if you will be so good—and those too—and lay them all in a heap just underneath, so that the apricot may fall upon them. If you don't do that, it will burst open with a thump. There ! now push the prop up slowly, so as to break the apricot from the stalk ; and when it is down, do not be in too great a hurry to take it up, as it's sure to have a good large wasp or two inside. Wasps are capital judges of ripe wall-fruit, as my dear father used to say. A little lower with the prop ! more to the left—now just push the prong upwards, and gently

lift—again—down it comes ! Mind the wasps ! three, four—mind ! perhaps that's not all—five ! I told you so !” . . . “How angry they are !”

“Not more, my dear, than you and I would have been under similar circumstances.”

I had not known Miss Mitford very long at this time ; but it was her habit to address all those with whom she was on intimate terms, by some affectionate expression. For several years, however, I **A bright face.** used to pay a visit of a week or ten days to Miss Mitford's cottage during the strawberry season, and again during the middle of summer, when her show of geraniums (she resisted all new nomenclatures) was at its height, and sometimes later, when the wonderful old fruit-trees just retained some half-dozen of their choicest treasures. It would be impossible for any engraving or photograph, however excellent as to features, to convey a true likeness of Mary Russell Mitford. During one of these visits, Miss Charlotte Cushman was also staying at the cottage, and exclaimed the first time Miss Mitford left the room, “What a bright face it is !” The effect of summer brightness over all the countenance was quite remarkable. A floral flush overspread the whole face, which seemed to carry its own light with it, for it was the same indoors as out. The silver hair shone, the forehead shone, the cheeks shone, and above all, the eyes shone. The expression was entirely genial, cognoscitive, beneficent. The outline of the face was an oblate round, of no very marked significance beyond that of an apple, or other rural “character” ; in fact, it was very like a rosy apple in the sun. Always excepting the forehead and chin. The forehead was not only massive, but

built in a way that sculpture only could adequately delineate. . . . This build of head, and strong outline of head and face, will go far to explain the strength of character displayed by Miss Mitford during the early and most trying periods of her life, with her extravagant and selfish father. It may also account for her general composure and presence of mind, both on great occasions and others, trifling enough to talk and write about, but of a kind to test the nerves of most ladies. For instance, in driving Miss Mitford one day in her little pony-chaise on a visit, she so riveted my attention on the special point of a story, that I allowed one wheel to run into a dry ditch at the roadside, and the pony-chaise must, of course, have turned over, but that we were "brought up" by the hedge. "Hillo ! my dear friend !" ^{Presence} said Miss Mitford ; "we must get out." ^{of mind.}

We did so ; the little trap was at once put on its proper course, and, without one word of comment, the bright-faced old lady took up the thread of her story.

R. H. HORNE : 'Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, addressed to Richard Hengist Horne.' (With a Preface and Memoir by R. H. Stoddard.) New York : James Miller, 1877.

The cottage where I found her was situated on the high road between Basingstoke and Reading ; and the village street on which she was then ^{James T.} living contained the public-house and ^{Fields' visit.} several small shops near by. There was also close at hand the village pond full of ducks and geese, and I noticed several young rogues on their way

to school were occupied in worrying their feathered friends. The windows of the cottage were filled with flowers, and cowslips and violets were plentifully scattered about the little garden. Miss Mitford liked to have one dog, at least, at her heels, and this day her pet seemed to be constantly under foot. I remember the room into which I was shown was sanded, and a quaint old clock behind the door was marking off the hour in small but very loud pieces. The cheerful old lady called to me from the head of the stairs to come up into her sitting-room. I sat down by the open window to converse with her, and it was pleasant to see how the village children, as they went by, stopped to bow and courtesy. One curly-headed urchin made bold to take off his well-worn cap, and wait to be recognized as "little Johnny." "No great scholar," said the kind-hearted old lady to me, "but a sad rogue among our flock of geese. Only yesterday the young marauder was detected by my maid with a plump gosling stuffed half-way into his pocket!" While she was thus discoursing of Johnny's peccadilloes, the little fellow looked up with a knowing expression, and very soon caught in his cap a gingerbread dog, which the old lady threw to him from the window. "I wish he loved his book as well as he relishes sweetcake," sighed she, as the boy kicked up his heels and disappeared down the lane.

JAMES T. FIELDS : 'Yesterdays with Authors.'

The poor cottage was crumbling around us, and if
 Leaves we had stayed much longer we should
 Three Mile have been buried in the ruins. And yet
 Cross for
 Swallow-
 field. it was great grief to go. Besides my

general aversion to new habitations, I had associations with those old walls which endeared them to me more than I can tell. There I had toiled and striven, and tasted of bitter anxiety. . . . There in the fulness of age, I had lost those whose love had made my home sweet and precious. . . . Other recollections, less dear and less sad, added their interest to the place. Friends many and kind; strangers, whose names were an honor, had come to that bright garden, and that garden room. . . . It was a heart-tug to leave that garden.

I walked from the one cottage to the other on an autumn evening, when the vagrant birds, whose habit of assembling here for their annual departure, gives, I suppose, the name of Swallowfield to the village, were circling and twittering over my head. . . . Here I am in the prettiest village, in the snugest and cosiest of all snug cabins; a trim cottage garden, divided by a hawthorn hedge from a little field guarded by grand old trees; a cheerful glimpse of the high-road in front, just to hint that there is such a thing as a peopled world; and on either side the deep silent lanes that form the distinctive character of English scenery.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD: 'Recollections of a Literary Life.'

I must say that personally I did not like her so well as I liked her works. The charming *bonhomie* of her writings appeared at first in her conversation and manners; but there were other things which presently sadly impaired its charm. It is no part of my business

Miss Mar-
tineau did
not like her.

to pass judgment on her views and modes of life. What concerned me was her habit of flattery, and the twin habit of disparagement of others. I never knew her respond to any act or course of conduct which was morally lofty. She could not believe in it, nor, of course, enjoy it ; and she seldom failed to "see through" it, and to delight in her superiority to admiration. She was a devoted daughter, where the duty was none of the easiest ; and servants and neighbors were sincerely attached to her. The little intercourse I had with her was spoiled by her habit of flattery ; but I always fell back on my old admiration of her as soon as she was out of sight, and her 'Village' rose up in my memory.

HARRIET MARTINEAU : 'Autobiography.' Boston : Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1877.

I never say one word more than appears to me to be true. To be sure, there is an atmosphere of love—a sunshine of fancy—in which objects appear clearer and brighter ; and from such
 "Not flattery pre-
 tence."
 I may sometimes paint ; but that is not flattery pre-
 pense, is it, my dear friend ? I never mean to flatter—no, never ! But it is a great pleasure to me to love and admire, and it is a faculty which has survived many frosts and storms.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir William Elford* in the former's 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

I suppose she was one of the earliest English
 Visited by
 Americans. Americans. She was far from democratic, but always spoke of that nation with great respect.

What impressed me much more was her admiration for Louis Napoleon ; upon which point, as on many others, we soon agreed to differ. She even approved of the *coup d'état*, concerning which she writes to me, a little apologetically, "My enthusiasm is always ready laid, you know, like a housemaid's fire"; which was very true.

JAMES PAYN : 'Some Literary Recollections.'

Carlyle tells us, "Nothing so lifts a man from all his mean imprisonments, were it but for moments, as true admiration"; and Miss Mitford admired to such an extent that she must have ^{Enthusiasm.} been lifted in this way nearly all her lifetime. Indeed she erred, if she erred at all, on this side, and over-praised and over-admired everything and everybody whom she regarded. When she spoke of Beranger, or Dumas, or Hazlitt, or Holmes, she exhausted every term of worship and panegyric. Louis Napoleon was one of her most potent crazes. . . . Although she had been prostrated by the hard work and increasing anxieties of forty years of authorship, when I saw her she was as fresh and independent as a skylark. She was a good hater as well as a good praiser, and she left nothing worth saving in an obnoxious reputation. . . . I have heard her go on in her fine way, giving preference to certain modern poems far above the works of the great masters of song. Pascal says that "the heart has reasons that reason does not know"; and Miss Mitford was a charming exemplification of this wise saying.

JAMES T. FIELDS : 'Yesterdays with Authors.'

Nothing ever destroyed her faith in those she loved. If I had not known all about him (from my own folks **Devotion** of another generation who had known him **to her father.** well), I should have thought her father had been a patriot and a martyr. She spoke of him as if there had never been such a father—which in a sense was true. He had spent his wife's fortune, and then another, and then the £10,000 [sic] which "little Mary" herself had got for him by hitting on the lucky number in a lottery, and was rapidly getting through her own modest earnings in the same free-handed manner, when good fortune removed him; but she always deemed it an irreparable loss. "I used to contrive to keep our house in order," she would say, speaking of her literary gains, "and a little pony-carriage, and my dear, dear father." To my mind he seemed like a Mr. Turveydrop, but he had really been a most accomplished and agreeable person, though with nothing sublime about him except his selfishness.

She had the same exaggerated notions of the virtues and talents of her friends (including myself); nay, her sympathies even extended to *their* friends, whom she did not know. Of course she had her **Prejudices.** prejudices by way of complement; and when she spoke of those who did not please her, her tongue played about their reputations like sheet-lightning—for there was much more flash than fork in it.

JAMES PAYN: 'Some Literary Recollections.'

She was a "country lady," and if she caught any author growing a snowdrop and crocus at the wrong time of the year, he never recovered a **A country lady.** place in her memory. On a certain occa-

sion she had been speaking of the rabbit-shooting at Bear Wood ; and afterwards happening to propose a visit there, I inadvertently remarked that I should be very happy to accompany her, but that of late years I had taken to gymnastic exercises, and quite given up all field-sports—besides, “I didn’t care for rabbit-shooting.” It was the wrong season !—and the look and exclamation that followed showed me that I had lost something of my position in her mind forever.

RICHARD HENGIST HORNE : ‘Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to R. H. Horne.’

I think I should have recognized her anywhere. The short, plump body, the round, cheerful old face, with cheeks still as rosy as a girl’s, the ^{Tranquil} kindly blue eyes, the broad, placid brow, ^{old age.} and bands of silver hair peeping from beneath the quaint frilled cap, seemed to be all features of the picture which I had previously drawn in my mind. But for a gay touch in the ribbons, and the absence of the book-muslin handkerchief over the bosom, she might have been taken for one of those dear old Quaker ladies, whose presence, in its cheerful serenity, is an atmosphere of contentment and peace. Her voice was sweet, round, and racy, with a delicious archness at times. Sitting in deep arm-chairs, on opposite sides of the warm grate, while the rain lashed the panes and the autumn leaves drifted outside, we passed the afternoon in genial talk.

BAYARD TAYLOR : ‘At Home and Abroad.’ New York : G. P. Putnam, 1862.

She was always cheerful, and her talk is delightful to

remember. From girlhood she had known and had been intimate with most of the prominent writers of her time, and her observations and reminiscences were so shrewd and pertinent that I have scarcely known her equal. Her voice had a peculiar ringing sweetness in it, rippling out sometimes like a beautiful chime of silver bells ; and when she told a comic story, hitting off some one of her acquaintances, **Conversa-
tion and
voice.** she joined in with the laugh at the end with great heartiness and *naïveté*. When listening to anything that interested her, she had a way of coming into the narrative with "Dear me, dear me, dear me," three times repeated, which it was very pleasant to hear.

JAMES T. FIELDS : 'Yesterdays with Authors.'

I seem to see the dear little old lady now, looking like a venerable fairy, with bright sparkling eyes, a clear, incisive voice, and a laugh that carried you away with it. **Voice and
laugh.** I never saw a woman with such an enjoyment of—I was about to say a joke, but the word is too coarse for her—of a pleasantry.

JAMES PAYN : 'Some Literary Recollections.'

The remark has often been made that we meet with no romance in Miss Mitford's history—no trace of even a passing predilection or an unfortunate attachment. **"Heart-
whole."** In her earlier years she was sometimes twitted about partialities for her cousin, Bertram Mitford, and others, but no impression seems to have been made. That she was heart-

whole was evident, for she could be jocose on the subject.

REV. A. G. L'ESTRANGE: 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford.'

She was constantly saying good words for unfledged authors who were struggling forward to gain recognition. No one ever lent such ^{A helping hand.} a helping hand as she did to the young writers of her country.

JAMES T. FIELDS: 'Yesterdays with Authors.'

I can never forget the little figure rolled up in two chairs in the little Swallowfield room, packed round with books up to the ceiling, on to the floor—the little figure with clothes on, of ^{In old age.} course, but of no recognized or recognizable pattern; and somewhere out of the upper end of the heap, gleaming under a great, deep, globular brow, two such eyes as I never, perhaps, saw in any other Englishwoman—though I believe she must have had French blood in her veins to breed such eyes, and such a tongue; for the beautiful speech which came out of that ugly (it was that) face, and the glitter and depth too of the eyes, like live coals—perfectly honest the while, both lips and eyes—these seemed to me to be attributes of the highest French, or rather Gallic, not of the highest Englishwoman. In any case, she was a triumph of mind over matter, of spirit over flesh.

CHARLES KINGSLEY: *Letter to James Payn*, quoted in 'Some Literary Recollections.'

She was much more proud of her plays (which had even then been well-nigh forgotten) than **Pride in her plays.** of the works by which she was so well known, and which at that time brought people from the ends of the earth to see her.

JAMES PAYN : 'Some Literary Recollections.'

I was early fond of her tales and descriptions, and have always regarded her as the originator of that new style of "graphic description" to which **Greater value of her tales.** literature owes a great deal, however weary we may sometimes have felt of the excess in to which the practice of detail has run. Miss Austen has claims to other and greater honors; but she and Miss Mitford deserve no small gratitude for rescuing us from the folly and bad taste of slovenly indefiniteness in delineation. Miss Mitford's tales appealed to a new sense, as it were, in a multitude of minds—greatly to the amazement of the whole circle of publishers who had rejected, in her works, as good a bargain as is often offered to publishers. Miss Mitford showed me at once that she undervalued her tales, and rested her claims on her plays. I suppose everybody who writes a successful tragedy must inevitably do this. Miss Mitford must have possessed some dramatic requisites, or her success could not have been so decided as it was; but my own opinion always was that her mind wanted the breadth, and her character the depth, necessary for genuine achievement in the highest enterprise of literature.

HARRIET MARTINEAU : 'Autobiography.'

Her 'Belford Regis' should probably take rank as her best work ; it has most power and most character ; and is somewhat less uniformly soft and green than 'Our Village' is. The 'Village,' however, is, by association, my favorite. If read by snatches, it comes on the mind as the summer air and the sweet hum of rural sounds would float upon the senses through an open window in the country, and leaves with you for the whole day a tradition of fragrance and dew. She is in fact a sort of prose Crabbe in the sun, but with more grace and less strength ; and also with a more steadfast look upon scenic nature—never going higher than the earth to look for the beautiful, but always finding it as surely as if she went higher. She is "matter-of-fact," she says, which may be so, but then she idealizes matter of fact before she touches it, and thus her matter of fact is as beautiful as the matter of fantasy of other people.

In my own mind—and Mr. Kenyon agrees with me—she herself is better and stronger than any of her books ; and her letters and conversations show more grasp of intellect and general power than would be inferable from her finished compositions. In her works, however, through all the beauty there is a clear vein of sense, and a quickness of observation which takes the character of a refined shrewdness. Do you not think so ? And is she not besides most intensely a woman, and an Englishwoman ?

ELIZABETH BARRETT : 'Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to R. H. Horne.' New York : James Miller, 1877.

I think you will like 'Our Village.' . . . Charles Lamb (the matchless 'Elia' of the *London Magazine*) says that nothing so fresh and characteristic has appeared for a long while. It is not over-modest to say this ; but who would not be proud of the praise of such a *proser* ?

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD : *Letter to Sir Wm. Elford*, in the former's 'Life,' by L'Estrange.

I am very indulgent towards such borrowings in general, knowing how extraordinary is the manner in which memory and invention are sometimes mixed up, especially where the first faculty is weak. With me it is singularly so, and for years I was tormented by constant fear that every line of tragedy less bad than the next was stolen from my letters. It was a miserable feeling.

M. R. MITFORD : *Letter to Mr. D. Starkey*, in 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford.'

All that vile design of doing good, or making out this to be wrong and that to be right, . . . I hold . . . to be the most fatal fault of all fiction nowadays. . . . It was the one fault of Miss Edgeworth that she wrote to a text. How much better she wrote without one she showed in 'Belinda.' All the greatest writers of fiction are pure of that sin—Chaucer, Shakespeare, Scott, Jane Austen ; and are not these precisely the writers who do most good as well as give most pleasure ?

M. R. MITFORD : *Letter to Mr. D. Starkey*, in 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford.'

There would be a tacit hypocrisy, a moral cowardice, if I were to stop here, and not to confess, what I think you must suspect, although by no chance do I ever talk about it—that I ^{Religious belief.} do not, or rather cannot, believe all that the Church requires. I humbly hope that it is not necessary to do so, and that a devout sense of the mercy of God, and an endeavor, however imperfectly and feebly, to obey the great precepts of justice and kindness, may be accepted in lieu of that entire faith which, in me, *will not* be commanded. You will not suspect me of thoughtlessness in this matter ; neither, I trust, does it spring from intellectual pride. Few persons have a deeper sense of their own weakness ; few, indeed, can have so much weakness of character to deplore and strive against.

M. R. MITFORD : *Letter to Rev. Wm. Harness*, in the former's ' Life,' by L'Estrange.

I am still very lame, carried, or rather lifted, step by step up and down stairs and into bed, and unable to stir when recumbent, almost to move when seated. Besides this, I am all over ^{A tedious illness.} as sore as if I were pounded in a mortar, and, although quite as cheerful as ever, yet paying for temporary excitement by exceeding weakness afterwards. In short, I am as infirm, as feeble, and as lively as it is well possible for a woman to be. I am got into the air, and I enjoy it so much, that I cannot but hope that it must eventually do me good. It seems to me that never was the marriage of May and June, which is always the loveliest moment of the year, so beautiful as now. The richness of the

foliage in our deep-wooded lanes, the perfume of the bean-fields, the luxuriant blossoming of all sorts of flowering trees. I have some lilacs of both colors, especially the white, which I would match against those of which Horace Walpole was so fond at Strawberry Hill.

Continued
pleasure
in nature.

M. R. MITFORD: *Letter to Mr. D. Starkey*, June 2nd, 1853, in 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford.'

I must tell you what has three times befallen me this last week. My maid K., in putting me to bed, burst into a storm of exclamations, all referring to the candlestick; I looked, and saw nothing but a dingy caterpillar about half an inch long. It moved, and a little bright star of bluish greenish light was reflected on the silver. It was a glow-worm! We extinguished the candle, and the candlestick was sent to one of the grass-plots in the front of the house, and in about ten minutes the beautiful insect had crawled out upon the turf. Four nights after, exactly the same thing occurred, and another glow-worm was found on one of the lower windows. We can only account for these visits to the candlestick by the circumstance of there being both nights a little jar of fresh-gathered pinks upon the table. . . . K., who is full of pretty sayings, will have it that, now that I—always so fond of those stars of the earth—can no longer go to see them, they come to visit me.

Delighted
with a
glow-worm.

M. R. MITFORD: *Letter to Mr. D. Starkey*, July, 1853, in 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford.'

The head is mercifully spared, but for above six

months I have been steadily growing worse and worse, and weaker and weaker. It is sad to write so to you, but it is the truth. Champagne and nourishing food keep me alive, and stimulating medicine. To-day is fine, and I sit by my open window enjoying the balmy air, altogether too much sunk in the chair to see more than the trees and the sky, and a bit of distant road, but still enjoying *that*. My roses are very beautiful, and I have many of the old moss, which are delicately sweet; and common white pinks, almost like cloves in their fragrance.

M. R. MITFORD : *Letter to Emily Jephson*, July 20, 1854, in 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford.'

The goodness shown to me often draws tears into my eyes. People whom all the world knows, and yet more, people of whom I have never heard, send to me whatever they think I shall like, call at my door, . . . come at any hour that I may appoint, if I be well enough to see them, and never take offence at a refusal. There is a reality ^{Characteris-}tics strong to ^{the very last.} about this when it has lasted above two years. . . . It has pleased Providence to preserve to me my calmness of mind and clearness of intellect, and also my powers of reading by day and by night, and, which is still more, my love of poetry and literature, my cheerfulness and my enjoyment of little things. This very day, not only my common pensioners the dear robins, but a saucy troop of sparrows and a little shining bird of passage, whose name I forget, have all been pecking at once at their tray of bread-crumbs outside the window. Poor, pretty things!

How much delight there is in these common objects, if people would learn to enjoy them !

M. R. MITFORD : *Letter to Mrs. Crowther*, January 1, 1855,* in 'Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford.'

* She died on the 10th of January.

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